SciFiNow's

80s SCI-FI ALMANAC

COMPLETE MOVIE GUIDE

1980 – 1989

NEW INTERVIEWS
BACK TO THE FUTURE STARS SPEAK!

THE EIGHTIES WAS A SEMINAL DECADE. FROM MINI SKIRTS TO MULLETS, THESE YEARS SPAWNED SOME INSPIRATIONAL STYLES, MANY OF WHICH ARE STILL GOING STRONG TODAY.

BUT WHERE THE EIGHTIES REALLY SHONE WAS ON THE SILVER SCREEN. ICONIC CHARACTERS AND GROUNDBREAKING FRANCHISES WERE BORN, AND WHILE SOME FILMS HAVE STOOD THE TEST OF TIME, OTHERS REQUIRE ROSE-TINTED GLASSES TO SEE THEIR ORIGINAL BEAUTY.

IN THIS BOOK WE TAKE YOU ON A JOURNEY THROUGH THE MOVIES THAT DEFINED A GENERATION. FROM BACK TO THE FUTURE AND THE SHINING TO TERMINATOR AND RETURN OF THE JEDI, ENJOY THE FILMS THAT MADE THIS ONE OF THE GREATEST DECADES OF CINEMA.

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THE 15 GREATEST BIG SCREEN BAD-ASSES OF THE 1980s

IT WAS A TIME OF BIG MUSCLES, **BIG MOUTHS AND BIG SUNGLASSES,** A TIME WHEN HEROES WHERE HEROES AND SUBTEXT WAS IGNORED. **TURN BACK THE CLOCK AND MARVEL** AT THE 15 MOST BAD-ASS SCI-FI AND FANTASY HEROES OF THE EIGHTIES...

KNOW YOUR ANTIHERO

- **BIG MOUTH** – THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE WISECRACK
- **MECHANICAL MAN** – COMPUTERS WILL BE BIG, WHY NOT BE ONE?
- **UBER-COOL** – RADIATING COOL FROM EVERY PORE
- **ASS-KICKER** – BLOODSHED FOLLOWS IN THEIR WAKE
- **STONY SILENCE** – A LOOK SAYS MORE THAN WORDS

2 THE T-800

From: The Terminator (1984)
Played by: Arnold Schwarzenegger

Attitude: Any semblance of a personality is purely the result of his programming. He's relentless and unforgiving. and doesn't feel pain, mercy or remorse. He's a giant, muscle-bound killing machine who will not stop until you are dead. He's also programmed with some catchy come-backs, such as "Fuck you, asshole."
Fashion sense: Having come buck naked through time, the T-800 is clad in biker leathers and reflector sunglasses, effortlessly blending in among the other bad-asses. Of course, he did steal these clothes from off the backs of three young punks who also thought it was a nice night for a walk and challenged the cyborg on his laundry day.
Backing music: *Terminator 2: Judgement Day* might have had more chart hits, but both films have the under-appreciated Brad Fiedel's glorious backing theme. Raucous clashes signify the coming metallic apocalypse as the mournful melody adds the tragedy.

See also: Dutch Schaefer in *Predator* and Conan in *Conan The Barbarian*. Conan is arguably the greatest figure in that most Eighties of sub-genres: the muscle-bound fantasy action movie, while Dutch is a classic Arnie hero: quipping, gurning, gun-toting and totally bad-ass.

3 RICK DECKARD

From: Blade Runner (1982)
Played by: Harrison Ford

Attitude: Like all the best noir heroes, Deckard's got a weary, seen-it-all demeanour. He's out of the game until he suddenly isn't, and possesses a certain charm that comes from his total lack of one, as Rachel will attest. He'll finish the job, but will resent you for making him. Oh, and he's probably a replicant.
Fashion sense: Deckard is dressed for the grim, perpetual rain of 2019 Los Angeles. His outfits are much more conservative than those chosen by his Replicant targets, although his brown trenchcoat has an outlandishly large collar that's pretty much his only nod to living in the future. He does have an exceedingly cool apartment, though.
Backing music: *Blade Runner*'s soundtrack is written by the one and only Vangelis. It's an absolutely stunning score that perfectly captures the melancholic future noir of Ridley Scott's film, with the dream-like *Main Titles* and *Blush Response* contrasting with the electrifying *End Titles*.

"REPLICANTS ARE LIKE ANY OTHER MACHINE – THEY'RE EITHER A BENEFIT OR A HAZARD. IF THEY'RE A BENEFIT, IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM"

1 OFFICER ALEX J MURPHY

From : RoboCop (1987)
Played by: Peter Weller

Attitude: Elements of Murphy's personality continues to shine through even after he's been rewired and put into OCP's future of law enforcement. He's got no time for lawbreakers, but he'll punish them with just a hint of style. He's a nostalgic soul, too, but don't count on him showing you any mercy.
Fashion sense: A sleek, shiny metal shell keeps what's left of his body intact. As the reaction to the remake's new suit showed, everyone's clearly a big fan of the original robot look. He's a knight in shining armour for the new millennium, and a glorious vision of what Detroit could be.
Backing music: *RoboCop*'s superb title theme by Basil Poledouris is, appropriately enough, up there with *The Terminator* for one of the best themes of the Eighties. There's plenty of synths scattered throughout the soundtrack, but that title theme is inspiration perfection. Bizarrely, the *Terminator* theme was used in the film's theatrical trailer.

"CALL ME SNAKE"

4 SNAKE PLISSKEN

From: Escape From New York (1981)
Played by: Kurt Russell

Attitude: Having been arrested and coerced into breaking into the prison island that New York has become, Snake is understandably surly. He's a loner who probably won't string more than a sentence together but he will get the job done. However, he doesn't give a fuck about your war. Or your president.

Fashion sense: Snake's got a black vest, light camo trousers and a bad-ass, beaten-up brown leather jacket. A tattoo of a black cobra rearing up from his waist is both suggestive and a reminder of his name. Finally, let's not forget the eyepatch and signature Kurt Russell mane of hair.

Backing music: Russell has the great privilege of being accompanied by the sounds of John Carpenter's synthesisers. Few directors have given their stars backing music as cool as Snake's, and even fewer directors actually wrote that backing music themselves.

See also: RJ MacReady in *The Thing* and Jack Burton in *Big Trouble In Little China*. MacReady offers a variation on the theme of 'stoic loner saves the world', this time with a fantastic beard, while big-mouth Jack Burton only thinks he's capable of such feats, but is no less bad-ass for it.

5 SEVEREN

From: Near Dark (1987)
Played by: Bill Paxton

Attitude: Bill Paxton is an actor who's rarely given characters as bad-ass as they think they are, but cowboy vampire Severen is an exception. He introduces himself to Caleb by announcing he's "gonna separate your head from your shoulders," takes on a big-rig face-first and has no fear of shitkickers, provided they've been shaved. Finger-lickin' good.

Fashion: Severen sports an exceedingly Eighties line in bad-ass clothing but, like the film itself, has a Western twist. Yes, he's got the black biker leathers, and yes, he's got the dark sunglasses, but he's also rocking a pair of spurs. Severen can also be seen showing off some truly gruesome injuries.

Backing music: The score for *Near Dark* comes from synth masters Tangerine Dream (*Thief*, *Sorcerer*, *Legend*). It's great stuff, but the most memorable part of the soundtrack comes courtesy of John Parr's *Naughty Naughty*, which kicks off the blood-soaked bar-room brawl sequence.

"IT AIN'T WHAT'S GOIN' ON, SON. IT'S WHAT'S COMIN' OFF. YOUR FACE. CLEAN OFF"

6 PRIVATE JENETTE VASQUEZ

From: Aliens (1986)
Played by: Jenette Goldstein

Attitude: She's tough. Really tough. Stoic, but ready with a wise-ass zinger, Vasquez is impatient to get into the fight, but doesn't panic when things go wrong. She'll volunteer for dangerous missions, but knows when to retreat and when to sacrifice herself. She's never been mistaken for a man. Have you?

Fashion sense: Admittedly, Vasquez doesn't have much fashion to talk about given that she's a soldier in uniform, but actress Jenette Goldstein personalised her outfit. With a bandana headband, fingerless leather gloves and 'El riesgo siempre vive' ('Who dares, wins', effectively) written on her armour, her bad-assdom is strongly put across.

Backing music: James Horner's score isn't exactly subtle, but then neither is James Cameron's film. It's loud, bombastic and lets you know that the Colonial Marines are in the fight of their lives against a terrifying army of monsters.

"LOOK, MAN. I ONLY NEED TO KNOW ONE THING: WHERE THEY ARE"

"HE'S NOT YOUR FRIEND, HE'S OURS! IF SOMEBODY'S GONNA KILL HIM, IT SHOULD BE US!"

"YOU WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE? YOU TALK TO ME"

7 MAX ROCKATANSKY

From: Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior (1981), Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome (1985) Played by: Mel Gibson

Attitude: Max has become a loner after the traumatic events of the first film, needing only his dog and sawn-off shotgun to keep him company. He'll help you if you're in a jam, but only if you have something to offer him in return, like petrol or ammunition.
Fashion sense: Max has the biker leathers that are de rigeur in a post-apocalyptic wasteland, reflecting a landscape where gasoline is the only true currency. Given the time period, his lack of a mullet is almost confrontational, although less confrontational than that sawn-off he carries.
Backing music: If you're riding across the outback with no one for company, you need some good music, and Max's themes are provided by Ozploitation legend Brian May, who provided the scores for *Road Games* and *Patrick*. Instead of going for the easy synth route, May opts for epic sweeping horns and strings.

8 SHOTARO KANEDA

From: Akira (1988)
Voiced by: Mitsuo Iwata

Attitude: Kaneda is a street punk and motorcycle rebel, but has a bigger heart than he lets on. He's ready to throw down and get his hands dirty, but he's loyal to his crew and takes it on himself to look after Tetsuo, even after he's become an all-consuming monster. Tetsuo!
Fashion sense: Kaneda eschews the black biker leathers, opting instead for a more striking bright red ensemble with a pill symbol on the back. His gang has a much classier look than their rivals the Clowns, and they've got the superior bikes to prove it.
Backing music: With plenty of raucous percussion, techno synths, choral singing and traditional Japanese instruments, the *Akira* soundtrack builds to the oncoming explosion of Neo-Tokyo. It's ominous, compelling and faintly mournful, and the perfect accompaniment to such a stunning film.

"YOU'D BETTER GET YOURSELF A GARLIC T-SHIRT, BUDDY, OR IT'S YOUR FUNERAL"

9 EDGAR AND ALAN FROG

From: The Lost Boys (1987)
Played by: Corey Feldman and Jamison Newlander

Attitude: These mouthy know-it-alls are the perfect ally for fighting Kiefer Sutherland's band of sub-zero cool vampires. Their knowledge comes entirely from comic-books, which isn't a problem in Joel Schumacher's universe, and they provide stakes and moral support to Corey Haim.

Fashion sense: You can get everything you need to know about the Frog Brothers from their wardrobe. Scorning the look of "fashion victim" Sam, Edgar (Corey Feldman) aims for a John Rambo look of red headband and camouflage T-shirt, while his brother Alan (Jamison Newlander) opts for military-style sleeve-less tees and a beret.

Backing music: The soundtrack to *The Lost Boys* is iconic. In addition to the classic *Cry Little Sister*, you've got Echo And The Bunnymen, INXS, Roger Daltrey, Lou Gramm and the muscular oiled-up beachfront saxman Timmy Cappello, who will force his way into your dreams with *I Still Believe*.

10 ASH WILLIAMS

From: The Evil Dead (1981), Evil Dead II (1987)
Played by: Bruce Campbell

Attitude: Ash is pretty cowardly for the most part, but can step up when the situation absolutely calls for it. He has got a big mouth, but can't find the words to explain himself when he needs to. By the end of the second film, however, he has strapped a chainsaw onto his bloody stump and definitively confirmed his bad-assdom.

Fashion sense: In terms of clothing, Ash keeps it relatively simple. A plain blue shirt, brown slacks… nothing too fancy and nothing that can't be replaced by getting covered in blood. However, we soon learn that it's all about the accessories when Ash tools up and becomes a killing machine. Groovy.

Backing music: The music in *Evil Dead II* isn't its most memorable feature, partly because there's so much visual chaos going on its hard to register anything else. That being said, the Deadites have a good line in creepy sing-song, telling Ash he'll be dead by dawn.

11 RED SONJA

From: Red Sonja (1985)
Played by: Brigitte Nielsen

Attitude: Red Sonja bows to no man, and she'll allow nothing to stand in her way. You could argue that Sonja's unflinching stoicism and icy demeanour stems from Brigitte Nielsen's flat performance, but that would be overlooking the excellent comic-book character. She's vengeful, violent and doesn't let the fact that she's in a bad film affect her bad-ass nature.

Fashion sense: Sonja is evidently from the *Conan* school of military outfits. There's the headband, flowing locks, big sword and leather clothes that reveal as much as possible. She also sports a pretty fantastic fur-lined red coat in one sequence, in case we'd forgotten what her name was.

Backing music: Given that the rest of the film falls squarely into so-bad-it's good territory, *Red Sonja* has a surprisingly excellent musical accompaniment. The score for the film is written and conducted by none other than the godfather of spaghetti western music, Ennio Morricone. Don't ask why; just bask in the glory of his music.

> "SUPPOSE, INSTEAD, I OPEN UP THAT GREAT, FAT BELLY OF YOURS?"

12 HE-MAN

From: Masters Of The Universe (1987)
Played by: Dolph Lundgren

Attitude: Fairly straightforward heroism. There's not a lot of room for moral complexity in *Masters Of The Universe*, and luckily He-Man doesn't have any. He knows that Skeletor needs to be taken down as soon as possible, and doesn't want anybody getting hurt in the process because, as he keeps saying "This is between us!"

Fashion sense: He-Man's outfit is clearly designed to show off as much of Dolph Lundgren's body as possible. It's less of a costume so much as a series of leather straps and shoulder plates, combined with the mandatory codpiece. Dolph rounds out He-Man with a giant bloody sword and a feather mullet, confirming the decade in case you were in any doubt.

Backing music: The sounds of *Masters Of The Universe* are provided by Academy Award winner Bill Conti, best known for his *Rocky* score, but it's clearly influenced by John Williams' *Star Wars* theme: big strings, big horns, big everything. Artists used in the film include usual Eighties suspects like Steve Winwood.

13 OTTO MADDOX

From: Repo Man (1984)
Played by: Emilio Estevez

Attitude: Otto has the kind of confrontational, jaded attitude you need when you're the most normal character in an Alex Cox film (without being an ordinary fuckin' person, of course). His natural surliness makes him a perfect recruit for Harry Dean Stanton's band of repo men, and capable of withstanding the total madness of the film's plot.

Fashion sense: The clothes maketh the repo man, and Otto proves capable of changing his wardrobe depending on the situation. His signature look is the sleeveless shirt and jeans combo, but he can dress "kinda square, like a detective" if he needs to, although he'll always sport an earring.

Backing music: The soundtrack for *Repo Man* is one of the best of the decade. With Iggy Pop, Black Flag, The Plugz, Circle Jerks, Burning Sensations and Fear, it's a fantastic slice of early-mid Eighties punk rock.

> "YOU REPO MEN, YOU'RE ALL OUT TO FUCKING LUNCH"

14 THE TOXIC AVENGER

From: The Toxic Avenger (1984)
Played by: Mitch Cohen

Attitude: Given his past as a 98-pound weakling named Melvin, he's got a lot of heart and a lot of love to give. He's also ready to right the wrongs of the corrupt Tromaville, and will deliver gruesome punishment to all those who deserve it. He's a hero for our times.

Fashion sense: The Toxic Avenger doesn't seem to put too much thought into his wardrobe, which is fair enough given that he fell into a vat of toxic waste wearing a tutu. Tattered, torn and stained, we'd describe Toxie's outfit as 'there' rather than stylish.

Backing music: Toxie doles out his brutal form of justice to the strains of the best Eighties tunes that Lloyd Kaufman could buy with his limited resources. They might not be the biggest hits, but they're definitely of their time – and they're brilliant.

15 NADA

From: They Live (1988)
Played by: Roddy Piper

Attitude: He's just a drifter looking for work; he's not looking for any trouble. Of course, trouble finds him anyway. When Nada realises that we're actually being oppressed by skeletal aliens, he takes it upon himself to save us all, even if he has to beat us to a bloody pulp to do so.

Fashion sense: Rowdy Roddy Piper bucks the trend a little by opting for a plaid shirt and jeans to emphasise his humble beginnings. He's everyone, he's no one; he's Nada. His outfit is later complemented by the addition of his magic sunglasses, which are both practical and super-bad-ass.

Backing music: Like Kurt Russell, Nada is backed by the sounds of John Carpenter's synthesisers. It's less iconic than the *Escape From New York* score, but it's still bad-ass, with pared-back guitars accompanied by a wailing harmonica to portray Nada's wandering ass-kicker.

> "I HAVE COME HERE TO CHEW BUBBLEGUM AND KICK ASS... AND I'M ALL OUT OF BUBBLEGUM"

The cast reunite at London Film and Comic Con in front of an audience of 2,000 fans.

THE FUTURE IS NOW

2015 marks the 30th anniversary of the release of Back To The Future. Michael J Fox, Christopher Lloyd and Lea Thompson are joined by many of their fellow cast members for a historic reunion at London Film and Comic Con

Does Lorraine McFly ever notice that Marty looks like that boy Calvin Klein?

We've parked up our hoverboards at London Film and Comic Con. No where else in the world can you find the cast of *Back To The Future* reunited to celebrate the 30th anniversary of this iconic film. 21 October 2015 is fast approaching… the future is almost here.

The first movie grossed $383 million worldwide, when did you notice that this film was turning into a legacy?

Michael J Fox: For a time travel movie, *Back To The Future* had a sense of timelessness about it. It existed apart from its period; it resonated. My kids still haven't watched it, though.

Christopher Lloyd: I guess when I realised that kids who had watched it when it first opened became parents with kids who were seeing it, who then became parents with kids watching the movie. I knew it was something that was going to stick around.

Lea Thompson: I knew we were on to something when I came out of the trailer I shared with Michael; it was wrapped in love letters from girls. I thought, 'This Michael Fox might be somebody!'.

Claudia Wells: I knew about eight years ago. I've gotten letters from fans – I got a three page hand written letter from a guy who said that when he was eight years old he was in a horrible, horrible family situation. He wanted to kill himself. He watched *Back To The Future* every single night and we were his family, we were his friends. We're the reason that he says he chose not to commit suicide. How's that for legacy?

James Tolkan: As soon as it opened, it was obvious. Everybody said, 'Wow, this picture jumps right out at you'. I hadn't seen it but it was obvious to me that we were going be a success.

Harry Waters Jr: I'm really fortunate that [composer] Alan Silvestri allowed me to sing the song [*Earth Angel*] on the album that went on to get a gold record. Then I knew, I guess.

Donald Fullilove: I have a confession to make: until 2009 I'd kind of forgotten about *Back To The Future*. As an actor I'd gone on to do other roles and things so I understood that *Back To The Future* had its run, its legacy. I didn't know how *huge* it was until the 2009 reunion. I saw it on the internet and I was like, '*Back To The Future* reunion? I was in that movie!' So I googled 'Goldie Wilson' and I was blown away by of all of you guys. At that point I realised, *Back To The Future* is going to be here forever and it's going to continue to touch people for forever. I'm humbled and honoured to have been a part of it.

Marc McClure: I knew [director] Robert Zemeckis was a great filmmaker, but at the cast and crew screening after the movie ended there was a standing ovation. In most cases you go to these screenings and there's some polite applause, then you head home. But everybody knew that they just saw a film that hadn't been done like that before.

Jeffrey Weissman: I had actually worked with Crispin Glover a year before so when I went to see *BTTF* I thought 'Oh I love that guy! He's fantastic in this! And Christopher Lloyd and Michael J Fox are amazing in this.' And I knew it was a hit,… And four years later when I got the call to fill some big shoes I had to pinch myself.

Ricky Dean Logan: I knew it was going to be iconic because I never saw *Back To The Future* but I *did* watch *Family Ties* which was just something. When I had the chance to audition and know that I might possibly be working with Christopher Lloyd, Michael J Fox and Lea Thompson it was great for me. Then I get stopped constantly because the hoverboard is so iconic.

Frances Lee McCain: I actually thought that movie was going to be a hit when I first read the script and I walked out of Robert

Michael J Fox and Christopher Lloyd share stories about filming the *Back To The Future* series.

Zemeckis's office thinking 'Yeah, this is going to be a great movie,' and it was! Then life goes on. Other parts come along. I was delighted every once in a while when I would hear it was around… When I found out it was going to have a reunion and that there was real enthusiasm around it, I was just beyond thrilled to be part of it.

MJF: It really fills me up with a warm feeling when I see fans dressed as other characters. They're the most genuine real people that I've ever met. And I think that these people love what they love, they love being together and love doing the things they enjoy and if that's a nerd, that's what Marty is.

Chris, you've revisited the role of Emmett Brown many times. Was it hard for you to slip back into character?

CL: It was very easy… I don't know what that says about me. I love the role. He's passionate about discovering things. His mind doesn't stop thinking of new ways to do new things.

Lea, you have to play your character multiple timelines. How challenging was that?

LT: It really was the best part I've ever had, which was a great thing to be known for. For me, in a lot of ways the hardest part was young Lorraine because, believe it or not, it wasn't exactly 'me'. I had to have that weird, horny kind of energy going on so I would sing 'Mr Sandman' all the time. It makes you crazy! I really loved the strange subversive quality of that innocent girl in the Fifties and so it was really a dream when I read it. I just was so excited. The parts were so well written and Bob Zemeckis had such a clear idea of the characters and what they were supposed to accomplish.

What did you imagine 2015 might be like?

MJF: I thought the Cubs would have won the World Series by now.

CW: I'm still waiting for the little pizza that you stick in the microwave and it comes out as a big pizza. Why don't we have that yet? It sounds like a good idea.

RDL: I just want to know why we can get to Pluto but we still can't get a hoverboard.

"FOR A TIME TRAVEL MOVIE, BACK TO THE FUTURE HAD A SENSE OF TIMELESSNESS ABOUT IT"
MICHAEL J FOX

Any blooper stories?

MJF: I wish I had a of how many times I got hit by that freaking door of that DeLorean – take after take: *whack*. It was the worst thing to drive. My hand was bleeding from hitting the flux capacitor, my head was bleeding and then I had to take it all off for the *Family Ties* set. The money it would take to get me back into the DeLorean again is *a lot*.

LT: My favourite is famous. It's from when we put real whisky in the flask and Michael really just probably wanted to drink it but he spat it out because he was so tired.

Chris and Michael, where do you think each of your characters would have been had they not been friends?

MJF: Doc was a mentor and a way for Marty to channel his energy into curiosity and exploration and discovery. Seeing that all this junk can turn into a machine that opens a can of dog food teaches him that all things are possible. When you're 17 years old in high school a lot of things don't seem possible, you keep running up against what you can't do and who you are… So to have this mentor, this guide, who is not like any other adults but is really special.

CL: I'm sure Doc would have found someone!

Which of the movies was the most fun to film?

CL: For me it was *Back To The Future 2 & 3*. Hands down. The third one was in the old West, it had the steam engine, Doc had a romance. Oh yes and there was moonshine. And there was the dancing with ZZ Top playing.

MJF: The first one was probably my favourite one to film just because it was such an overwhelming experience, doing a show and a movie at the same time with these amazing people, this cast and Bob Zemeckis. I was five or six years away from just being a kid in Canada, working on the fish docks or joining the army like my Dad. And then I'm on set with Steven Spielberg and Bob Zemeckis and these amazing actors, doing this amazing story – you just want to pinch yourself…

Christopher Lloyd didn't find it hard to get back into the character of Doc Emmett Brown.

Is Marty kind of a nerd? Michael J Fox certainly thinks so.

TURN OVER FOR OUR BACK TO THE FUTURE COMPLETE GUIDE

Eighty-eight miles per hour

The complete guide to Back To The Future

Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale's tale of a teenager who travels back through time to meet his own parents defied all obstacles to become the biggest hit of 1985. So join us as we take you on a thrilling ride back to Back To The Future

It's Memorial Day, 1985 and *Spaceman From Pluto* has just been released by Universal Studios. Starring Eric Stoltz as reluctant time traveller Marty McFly and John Lithgow as Professor Emmett Brown, it tells the story of how Marty travels back in time and meets his parents, only to discover that Professor Brown's huge and immovable time machine has run out of nuclear fuel, leaving him stranded in the past. Teaming up with the 1955 Professor, the duo sneak onto a nuclear test site – complete with the Professor's pet chimpanzee, Einstein in tow – with plans to use the incoming blast to power-up the Professor's time machine and send Marty back to the future.

Hard to swallow, isn't it? But if various studio executives got their way, this is exactly the scenario that could have played out in American cinemas on that Memorial Day in 1985. Luckily, *Spaceman From Pluto* never happened, so let's get into our own time machine – we favour Austin Powers' psychedelic beetle, it's just groovy, baby – and find out how a film with one of the worst-sounding names of all time was transformed into the megabucks global smash hit that was *Back To The Future*.

There's an old saying in Hollywood that goes: you're only as popular as your last movie. It was a phrase that writer Robert Zemeckis knew all too well. After numerous collaborations with co-writer Bob Gale failed to set the box office alight, Zemeckis found their latest effort – a story about a teenager who travels back to the past – incredibly tough to sell. "In my archives, I've got a rejection letter from every single studio," he recalls. "Sometimes they even sent it back twice."

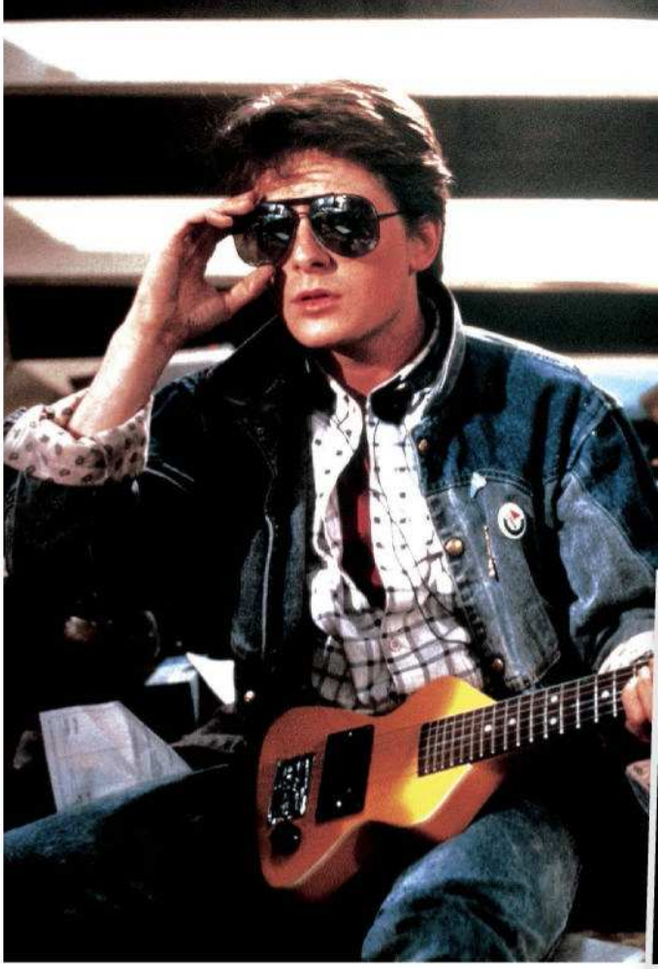
While it seems incredible that a script of *Back To The Future*'s calibre could be so cruelly ignored, there was one individual who saw the story's worth from the very beginning. His name: Steven Spielberg. "Spielberg was the only guy who got it," continues Zemeckis. But even having the interest of a then pre-*E.T.* Spielberg wasn't enough to persuade any studios to take interest in the time-travelling tale, mainly because of those aforementioned losses from Zemeckis and Gale's previous projects, the Kurt Russell-starring *Used Cars* and the Nancy Allen vehicle *I Wanna Hold Your Hand*. Spielberg had already executive produced both films and they had badly flopped upon release, and let's not forget *1941*. "We took the blame for that one," recalls Zemeckis about Spielberg's World War II failure. "It was his only money-losing movie up to that point, and it happened to be the one we wrote. I remember saying to Steven: 'If we make this movie and it doesn't work, we'll probably never be able to work again.' And he just said: 'You're right.'"

As a result, it ended up in the cinema wilderness for a good three years, but then there was a breakthrough. Zemeckis helmed *Romancing The Stone*, a film about a novelist who goes looking for her missing sister and craves romance and adventure. It became a huge hit and all of a sudden Zemeckis was flavour of the month. He could now sell his script in earnest.

Of course, the original script went through several changes before it reached the big screen, but the core concept of the time-travelling teenager remained in place and it's this aspect of the story that co-writer Bob Gale feels was so essential. "After *Used Cars* came out [in 1980], I went back to visit my parents in St Louis, Missouri and I found my father's high-school yearbook. I discovered that my father had been the president of his graduating class, which was something I didn't know about. So I thought to myself, 'Gee, if I had gone to high school with my dad, would I have been best friends with him?' And that was the spark of the initial idea.

> **"THE WAY I SEE IT, IF YOU'RE GOING TO BUILD A TIME MACHINE INTO A CAR, WHY NOT DO IT WITH SOME STYLE?"**
> DR EMMETT BROWN

Does the actor on the left look familiar? Picture him without hair. It's Billy '*Titanic*' Zane.



"WHAT HAPPENS TO US IN THE FUTURE? DO WE BECOME ASSHOLES OR SOMETHING?"
MARTY MCFLY

When I got back to California I told the story to Bob [Zemeckis] and he said, 'Yeah, and wouldn't it be interesting if your mum, who said she'd never, ever kissed a boy on a date turned out to be the school slut?' Of course, after that there was only one way to have a kid go to high school with his parents and that was, from our point of view, to do it in a time machine."

Oh yes the time machine. It was originally designed as a huge chamber that the Doc towed around in his pickup truck and it ran on nuclear power. "In our early draft, they were required to drive out to a nuclear test site in New Mexico. That was the climax of the movie and it stayed that way until budget problems made it impossible to do."

While the time machine changed significantly, the pair's actual concept of time travel remained unchanged. "As far as the nuts and bolts of time travel itself, that's one of the things that Bob and I are really proud of," confirms Zemeckis. "We were absolute fanatics about dealing with what the real rules of time travel would be, so we based our time-travel theories on *The Time Machine* by HG Wells. Simply put, you travel through time; you don't travel through space. Most of your time travel stories and movies make that fatal mistake. You're in California and you travel back to Ancient Rome. How did you get to Rome if you're in this latitude and longitude? The whole reason why we had the car unable to start after he got back to the future was so that we didn't have to deal with the duplication of two DeLoreans. We only had to deal with him being duplicated once. And that one paradox we cleaned up real quick."

With every studio now desperate to get their hands on Zemeckis and Gale, the two writers had their pick of the bunch. Eventually they decided to go with Universal, mainly because the pair were keen to resume their collaboration with Spielberg. He was the one man who had first seen promise in their unique script. "We felt that the right thing to do was to bring it to the only guy who had original faith in it in the first place and wasn't interested in our box-office track record," said Zemeckis.

While they had found a willing studio, the picture could only go ahead if certain conditions were met; conditions dictated to them from Universal Studio's head at the time, Sid Sheinberg. "I remember Sheinberg coming back to us with four notes after Steven gave him the screenplay to read," recalls Zemeckis. "One was that we now had to call Professor Brown, 'Doc Brown'. The second was that we had to replace the chimp, who was Doc's original mascot, with a dog. Sid said, 'You have to get rid of the chimp because no one is going to see a movie with a chimp in it.'"

"I've done the research," continues Gale about Sheinberg's chimp theory. "No movie with a chimpanzee in it has ever made a profit. The last [of Sheinberg's stipulations] was that he didn't want Marty's mother to be called Meg. He didn't like that name

"Something's got to be done about your kids"

The spin-offs of Back To The Future

When a movie becomes a global mega-hit it's inevitable that the cash cow will be milked, so here are *Back To The Future*'s spin-offs...

Back To The Future: The Animated Series

First aired by CBS in 1991, *The Animated Series* mainly focused on the continuing adventures of Doc Brown and his immediate family. Marty occasionally appeared in the show and both the DeLorean and Doc's train from *Part III* were used as time machines.

Each series was 13 episodes long and ran for two series. Although Christopher Lloyd featured in the live-action parts, his cartoon form was voiced by Dan 'Homer Simpson' Castellaneta.

Back To The Future: The Comic

The *Back To The Future* comic was published by Harvey Comics and, unlike the animated series, it featured Marty in every adventure.

First published in 1991, the comics often saw Marty, Doc and the rest of Doc's family travelling to many places outside of Hill Valley (just like the animated show), which must have been particularly annoying for Bob Gale and Robert Zemeckis because it totally destroyed the time-travel code they had painstakingly created for the movies.

Michael J Fox is almost unrecognisable under the fuzzy facial hair of Seamus McFly.

at all, so he said to name her Lorraine. Which, coincidentally, was the name of his wife."

So with Zemeckis and Gale having their new orders, it was time to get the actual movie... Great Scott! We almost forgot the biggest change that Sheinberg wanted to make: the changing of the actual movie's title. "Sid had decided that the new, 'hip' title for the movie should be *Spaceman From Pluto* and that's because of the comic book that the kid has in the barn, *Space Zombies From Pluto*," recalls a clearly bemused Zemeckis. "Sid actually sent us a memo with several additional changes that had to be made to the movie to work with the new title and one of them was that instead of Marty saying, 'I'm Darth Vader from the planet Vulcan', he should say 'I'm from the planet Pluto'.

Bob and I got this memo and we were really scared because he really meant it. You have to be careful about the kind of fights you pick with the head of a company. He wasn't just the head of the studio; he was the head of the company. Everyone at Universal thought *Back To The Future* was a great title except for Sid. So we went to Steven with this memo because he was copied onto it and said, 'Steven, what are we going to do? He really means it. He really wants to change the title.' Steven wrote a mail back that read, 'Dear Sid, thank you so much for your most humorous memo. We really all got a big laugh out of it.' Steven knew that Sid was too proud to admit that he'd meant it seriously and that was the end of it."

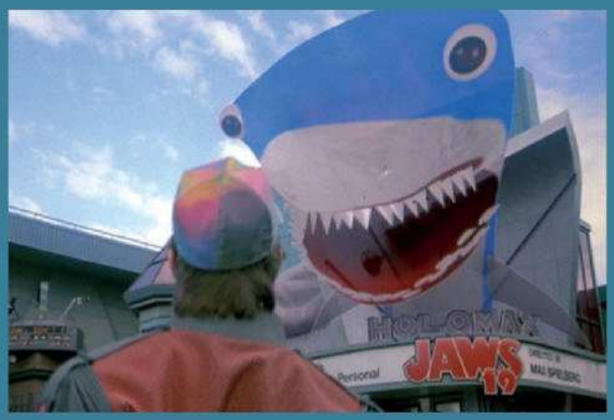
Back To The Future: The Games

Image Works released its first videogame (based on *Part II*) in 1990, and while it stuck closely to the plot of the film, it was criticised for its average gameplay, long loading times and poor-looking visuals.

Back To The Future: Part III (also by Image Works) was released a year later, and was far more successful. Like its predecessor, it featured a variety of different stages, but boasted superior visuals and was far more enjoyable to play. The Spectrum version was even awarded a Smash by *Crash* magazine.

"Shark still looks fake"

Do the objects from Marty McFly's future actually exist yet?



Holographic advertisements

While not quite up to the standard of the image used for *Jaws 19*, holographic advertising does exist. Vizoo, an advertising and film company, has created technology that allows a projected image to merge with real surroundings. It has been used in Scandinavia to promote *LOTR: Return Of The King*.

Hoverboard

Robert Zemeckis once jokingly stated that the hoverboard did exist – they were just held back from production by nervous parents. We're deep into 2015 so unless Mattel are biding their time, we're unlikely to see any huge advancement on the standard skateboard. The most exciting thing to happen at the moment is Heelys.

Self-fitting clothes

If clothes do exist that magically resize themselves in order to fit you, then we haven't discovered them yet. We think we'll probably just have to stick with the tried and tested method of sending out our partners to the shops to get clothes that fit us properly instead. It's worked so far.

Flying cars

Sadly, there's about as much chance of getting flying cars by the end of this year as there is of the ozone layer being healed. Still, this doesn't stop nearly every film set in the future from including them. We love the idea of being able to zip around in a flying Clio, but we don't quite fancy taking another driving test just yet.

Class of 1955

What are the stars up to now?

Michael J Fox

Marty McFly

Since discovering he has Parkinson's, Michael J Fox doesn't work as often as he used to. His most notable performances of recent times include returning to voice Stuart Little in *Stuart Little 3* as well as playing a brilliant surgeon with OCD in *Scrubs*.

Christopher Lloyd

Doctor Emmett Brown

Despite having great success as Uncle Fester in the *Addams Family* movies, Christopher Lloyd's most notable performance has been in the bookstore comedy *Stacked* with Pamela Anderson.

Crispin Glover

George McFly

After failing to reprise his role of George McFly due to asking for too much money, Glover has had a fairly low-key career. He didn't really burst back into the public's consciousness, until he portrayed the scary Thin Man in the *Charlie's Angels* movies.

Lea Thompson

Lorraine McFly

After playing Marty's mother in all three *Back To The Future* films, Thompson appeared in numerous TV shows and films, including *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *Caroline In The City* and, more recently, several *Jane Doe* television movies.

Thomas F Wilson

Biff Tannen

Tom Wilson, as he's now known, has had a highly prolific – if low key – post-*Back To The Future* career and has appeared in everything from kids' TV shows like *SpongeBob SquarePants*, to videogames such as the *Wing Commander* series.

Amazingly, Elijah Wood looks older here than he does in the *Lords Of The Rings* trilogy. We reckon it's the hat.

With everything now in place it was just a matter of getting the right characters to portray the time-travelling duo. Zemeckis had been a huge fan of the film *The Adventures Of Buckaroo Banzai Across The 8th Dimension* and felt that John Lithgow would be perfect for the role of Doc Brown, but was devastated to discover that the actor wouldn't be available for filming. Zemeckis was soon told to consider Christopher Lloyd (who had also appeared in *Banzai*) and Zemeckis recalls that he, "Just came into the audition room and sat down and looked at me with those eyes."

The rest of the principal cast were now in place, with the exception of main hero Marty McFly. Zemeckis had seen Michael J Fox and felt he was perfect for the role, but Fox's commitment to the TV show *Family Ties* meant that his producers wouldn't even tell him about the role, let alone allow him to audition for it. Realising that time was running out, Zemeckis went ahead and cast Eric Stoltz, only to eventually realise he wasn't going to work.

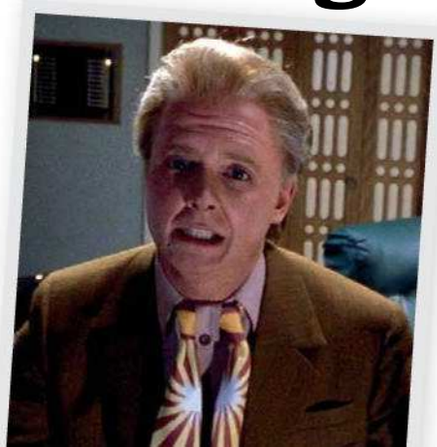
"The lesson I learned there was that you just have to stick to your convictions at all costs, no matter what," recalls Zemeckis about the casting that ended up costing the shoot several precious weeks. "It was completely my fault and I miscast Eric. I had always envisioned Michael in the part but conventional wisdom was that you couldn't possibly do a feature film with an actor who's in a TV series; it's impossible. One of the other mandates I was given by Mr Sheinberg was that if I didn't have the movie for Memorial Day, I wasn't making it. So I was stuck and I had to cast somebody and Eric was the best that I had available. When I shot the first couple of weeks of the movie, though, he just didn't understand, or I wasn't able to communicate the type of humour that I was seeing in the movie. We ended up getting Michael on the understanding that *Family Ties* always came first and we

"It's just that you're so... big"

The aging effects of Back To The Future

"One of the important decisions we made in the movie was using young actors to play themselves old," recalls Bob Gale about Ken Chase's super special effects. "At the time, there were executives that thought we should just find actors that looked like them to play them older, but we went through quite a lot of make-up tests to prove it could be done like this. Ken had done all the prosthetic make-up on *Roots*, and he constantly told us that it would be far easier for him to make these 18-year-olds look like they were 75, instead of 45, as he could have put full make-up on all over their faces."

"The process itself was pretty time-consuming," recalls Michael J Fox, who ended up playing four different roles (including his daughter) for *Part II* and *III*. "It was about four hours all told and it's not the most pleasant thing in the world, but I think it's all worth the fun you can have when you're actually in character."



"HELLO? HELLO? ANYBODY HOME? HUH? THINK, MCFLY"
BIFF TANNEN

proceeded to make the movie from 6pm to 6 in the morning because Michael was working on the TV show during the day. We didn't make the Memorial Day date but we did make the Fourth of July [Independence Day]."

Interestingly, it was the intervention of Sheinberg who made sure that *Back To The Future* made that lucrative bank holiday. "This move ruined post-production schedules in Hollywood, because nobody thought this was even possible," recalls Gale on *Back To The Future*'s nine-week post-production. "At the point where we changed actors, Universal was resigned to the fact that the movie probably wouldn't come out until the middle of August. We had a dynamite sneak preview and Mr Sheinberg sees the movie with this audience and they go nuts for it. Even though the visual effects weren't finished and the last shot was in black and white. He pulled us aside and said: 'What will we have to do to get this movie out for the Fourth of July weekend?' We simply replied: 'Write some cheques.' And he said: 'Okay, whatever it costs, do it.'"

Despite the many setbacks that Gale and Zemeckis endured, *Back To The Future* made its lucrative opening slot and ended up grossing its original £10 million cost in its first week. Surprisingly, the interest in the movie continued to grow and its second weekend showing was even stronger than the first. It's something that's almost unheard of in today's blockbuster climate, where films usually open massively and then tail off. In all, *Back To The Future* grossed $210 million at the US box office and became the biggest selling film of 1985. Needless to say, Universal wanted a sequel.

"We had never designed the first *Back To The Future* to have a sequel," recalls Zemeckis about the film's ending that sees the Doc returning from the future in a now-flying DeLorean. "The flying car at the end was a joke. It worked as a great joke and a great payoff. Everyone assumed that we had this grand idea like George Lucas did about *Star Wars*. My only hope for *Back To The Future* was that it would make its money back. Obviously I wasn't designing the movie for a sequel because I never would have put the girlfriend back in the car. What happens though, is that when you make a movie this successful it becomes a piece of real estate. It becomes a franchise and the reality comes to you very quickly which is: 'We're making a sequel. You guys can either help us or not but the sequel is going to be made regardless.'"

Zemeckis and Gale decided to go ahead and, amazingly, managed to get practically all the principal cast to return. The only notable exceptions were Claudia Wells (Jennifer) who dropped out for personal reasons and Crispin Glover who had portrayed George McFly. "Crispin decided that he wanted all kinds of things that were way out of line for an actor at this point in his career," recalls Gale about Crispin's decision to pull out. "The whole idea of this alternate 1985 in which George McFly is a tombstone, really came about because we knew that we didn't have Crispin.

They may not have had Glover any more (although that didn't stop them using previously shot footage of him and subsequently getting sued by the actor) but they did have a great script. While *Back To The Future* saw Marty travelling back to 1955 and nearly erasing his own existence, by inadvertently making his future mother fall in love with him, the sequel was a far more complicated affair. Doc, Marty and Marty's girlfriend Jennifer (now played by Elisabeth Shue) head into the future. When they

Family Ties

The McFly Family Tree

Seamus McFly
Seamus McFly travelled with his wife and brother from Ireland and is a devout Catholic.

Maggie McFly
Set up a farm with her husband Seamus just outside Hill Valley after they moved to America from Ireland.

Martin McFly
Travelled with his brother Seamus from Ireland, but was sadly killed in a saloon fight.

William McFly
William is the first McFly to be born in America and is Marty's great-grandfather.

Arthur McFly
Marty's grandfather. He never appears in any of the movies, but is mentioned in the novel.

Sylvia McFly
George's mother. Again, she never appears in the movies, only the novel.

George McFly
Marty's father. Is constantly bullied by Biff Tannen until he eventually sticks up for himself and wins Lorraine Baines's heart.

Lorraine McFly
Marty's mother who initially falls for him in 1955 when he travels back in time. She has three kids.

Dave McFly
Marty's elder brother originally works for Burger King, but once Marty returns from the past, he has a job in an office.

Linda McFly
Marty's elder sister originally bemoans the fact that she is ugly and can't get a date. By Marty's return she's beating them off with a stick. That's Hollywood for you.

Marty McFly
The youngest McFly is best friends with Doctor Emmett Brown, has a girlfriend called Jennifer and longs to be a rock star. He conveniently creates rock 'n' roll when he travels back to 1955.

Jennifer Parker
Jennifer marries Marty McFly and they have two children: Marlene and Marty Jr. When she visits the future with Marty and Doc, she inadvertently discovers that her future husband will be involved in a terrible accident.

"It don't take money, don't take fame"

The music of Back To The Future

Huey Lewis And The News

1 "I brought Huey into the editing room" recalls Zemeckis. "And showed him a cut-scene. It was when Marty blasts out of Doc's house on his skateboard and Huey said: 'I get this. You want a major song. We've got to do a song in a major key.' That was it – he went off and wrote *The Power Of Love*."

Marty McFly

2 "I had played the guitar as a teenager, and while I wasn't gifted I did know my way around *Johnny B Goode*," remembers Michael J Fox. "Sadly, the music had already been pre-recorded, so I decided that I would finger-synch and play it note for note, so you'd think Marty was actually playing." And it worked – the scene really cooked.

ZZ Top

3 With *Back To The Future: Part II* not featuring a specific theme song, it was down to Southern Rockers ZZ Top to carry a tune for *Part III*. While it lacks the sheer impact of *The Power Of Love*, it perfectly suits the western motive of the movie and allowed the trio to cameo in the actual film – look out for them as the band that plays at the town celebrations. The song is also featured on their 1990 album *Recycler*.

go back, they land in an alternate 1985 where Marty's father is now deceased, all because the future Biff (Marty's nemesis in the first film) steals a sports almanac from Marty and gives it to his 1955 self. Marty must then travel back to 1955 and retrieve the sports almanac, while avoiding the 1985 version of himself that is trying to get back to the future. And if that sounds complicated to read, imagine how difficult it was for us to write it so it made sense.

"Bob and I searched our souls for quite a long time and then it dawned on us that we were in a situation that was unique because we had the opportunity to do a sequel to a movie that's about time travel and time paradox," recalls Zemeckis about the sequel's complicated, but brilliant plot. Unlike other movies we could do something that you couldn't do in any other circumstance, which is to go into the first movie in the second movie, from a completely different angle. That excited me. And that's why I think *Back To The Future II* is one of my most interesting movies, one of my favourites and certainly the strangest movie I've made."

As well as having a more complicated plot, the sequel also ramped up the special effects, especially for the scenes when Marty and Doc head to the future, which proved another headache for Zemeckis and Gale. "There's no digital work in any of the movies," reveals Zemeckis. "Everything was optical. There are only about 30 shots in the whole movie. Everyone sees it as a big special effects movie, but there weren't many shots. This was real old-fashioned optical stuff from the early days of *Star Wars*."

Some of the effects may well have been old-fashioned – Zemeckis now likes to refer to them as 'quaint' – but occasionally *Back To The Future* did break new ground, with one particular example being the filming of multiple characters in the second film. "We really need to come up with a system where I could do these splits where I could put two actors in the same frame and be able to move the camera. So we were able to commission ILM to build what has now become known as the Vista Glide camera, which was a robotic, motion-control camera dolly system. We'd do a scene with Michael playing three different characters. He's got four or five hours of make-up to change into each character and once you set the camera into position you have to glue everything down to the set so it can't be touched. Some of the scenes were so elaborate and Michael's make-up took so long that we had to do them over a series of two days."

Product placement was also a problem with the sequel. Zemeckis had already been burnt in the original movie when he was contractually obliged to feature Californian Raisins. This was after an executive took $50,000 and promised the company that *Back To The Future* would do for raisins what *E.T.* had done for Reece's Pieces. Unhappy with pressure from advertising, he eventually relented and put an advert for *Californian Raisins* next to a bus bench that a tramp was sleeping on at the end of the film. The board was understandably furious and received their money back after they threatened to sue. "Nobody really cares about product placement until they know the movie is going to be a hit," laments Zemeckis. "That's one of the biggest problems with sequels."

Despite being every bit as good as the film that had spawned it, *Back To The Future Part II* only grossed $118 million at the US box office. Zemeckis feels that one aspect of the film that suffers is its editing, mainly because he was filming both *Part II* and *III* back to back. Regardless of Zemeckis's concerns, we still feel that *Part II* is nigh on perfect and is far more than the convenient cash-in that many reviews called it at the time of release.

> **"SO YOU'RE MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER. THE FIRST MCFLY BORN IN AMERICA AND YOU PEED ON ME"**
> MARTY MCFLY

And so on to the final part of the trilogy, which sees the Doc fall in love with an intelligent school teacher (Mary Steenburgen), Marty becoming a cowboy and using the name Clint Eastwood to blend in with the locals, and ZZ Top proving that they really do look like they've just come out of the last century.

Possibly realising that *Part II* was somewhat tricky to follow – Doc Brown even has to explain what happens to the audience so they can grasp what's going on in a lengthy exposition – Zemeckis and Gale made the third part of their trilogy far easier to follow. Granted, there are still holes that can be picked apart if you really feel the need to, but this is a far warmer film that concentrates first on the relationships of its main characters, and it's all the better for it. What really sets *Part III* apart from its peers, though, is that it's far more action-packed, mainly due to the Wild West period Marty travels back to. "That was the most romantic time of the American west, as opposed to the whole civil war era," explains Zemeckis about his choice of setting. "It was this pre-industrial revolution and when the railroads first came across. 1885 was the natural choice because it was exactly 100 years from 1985."

It also happened to allow Zemeckis and Gale to have a little fun with the normally serious genre (*Blazing Saddles* obviously not included) and like the futuristic segment of *Part II*, *Part III* was laced with humour. From the moment Marty swings in to the local saloon looking like an extra from a Roy Rogers movie, to casually informing passing cowpokes that his name's Clint Eastwood, the razor-sharp script never falters for a second.

"Roads? Where we're going we don't need roads"

If you are fortunate enough to take a trip to Universal Studios Japan, you may well want to try out 'Back To The Future: The Ride'. Essentially a huge simulator, it's a fast-paced, first-person adventure through time with the audience chasing after Biff Tannen.

Starting off in the year 2015, the action quickly moves to the Ice Age, where the audience gets damaged by an avalanche (caused by Biff beeping his horn) and look doomed to die. Only for Doc Brown to restart their time machine and send them to the Cretaceous Period. Dinosaur hijinks follow, the audience ends up saving Biff and everyone makes it safely back to present day.

Initially opened at Universal Studios Florida in 1991, it proved such a success that a near-identical ride was set up in Universal Studios Hollywood two years later. The Japanese ride was built in 2001, where it remains to this day.

Sadly, poor capacity meant that the ride in Orlando was eventually closed in 2001, 16 years after it was first opened. The Hollywood version fared a little better and was only shut down in 2007. Both rides are now due to be replaced with a ride based on *The Simpsons*.

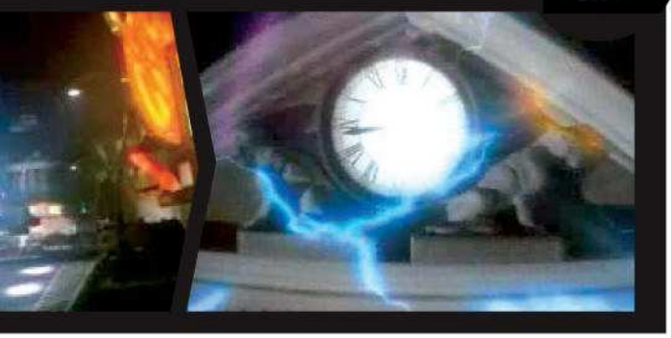
Zemeckis had ILM create new technology so he could feature Michael J Fox and other actors in several scenes with themselves.

If the script proved relatively painless for Gale and Zemeckis, the actual shoot was anything but. Filmed back-to-back with its predecessor, filming the two movies was a logistical nightmare for Zemeckis. "We shot two movies over 11 months with a three-week hiatus from when we went from *Back To The Future Part II* to Northern California to shoot the western stuff," confirms Gale. "The most hellacious part of it was when we were finishing *Part II*, while we were still shooting *Part III*. That's when we kind of had to divide our forces. The editors had to stop working on assembling *Part III* so they could fully concentrate on *Part II*."

"The thing I personally learned about doing the *Back To The Future* trilogy is that sequels are a very tough thing to try to pull off," finishes off Zemeckis. "The problem with doing sequels is that everyone has an opinion. When you're doing a movie that nobody knows about, it's your work. It's your movie and the audience accept it with an open mind. But in a sequel, everyone is writing their own sequel subconsciously or even consciously. Everybody has a feeling about what they want and you can't please everyone." That may well be the case, it's hard to imagine anyone not liking them.

The **BACK TO THE FUTURE TRILOGY** boxset is available on Blu-ray from Universal Studios

The theme park ride



"Great Scott!" The best bits from the trilogy

The DeLorean
Mysteriously unveiled when Marty's summoned to a deserted parking lot, the time-travelling vehicle is backed out of a truck and makes its debut in a hiss of dry ice. A gull-wing door opens, the Doc pops out and says, "When this baby hits 88 miles an hour, we're going to see some serious shit." He wasn't wrong. The beautiful contraption steals every scene it's in.

The spaceman
Marty is frustrated by George's refusal to ask Lorraine out. He then decides to climb into his radiation suit, slip a pair of headphones on George's ears while he sleeps, and blast him awake with the sound of Van Halen. Stating that he is Darth Vader from the Planet Vulcan, Marty tells the terrified George that he'll melt his brain if he doesn't ask her out.

The skateboard chase
When he trips up Biff, Marty is quickly chased out of Lou's Cafe by Tannen and the rest of his cronies. Stealing a kid's box cart, he kicks the top off it to create the world's first skateboard. Biff and his gang quickly pursue Marty in Biff's car around the town's square in an exciting chase sequence, which was mirrored in *Part II* with futuristic hoverboards.

Johnny B Goode
When the lead guitar player damages his hand, Marty agrees to fill in for him. Disaster strikes, though, when George loses Lorraine to another dancer and Marty's hand begins to disappear. Luckily, George gets his date back and a relieved Marty let's rip with his own version of *Johnny B Goode*, inadvertently inventing rock 'n' roll in the process.

The clock tower
With the DeLorean out of power, the only way of getting Marty back to the future is by making sure it's powered by the lightning that strikes the town square's clock tower. Just as Marty is about to get into the car, they realise that an important cable has broken loose, so the Doc has to climb up the tower to reconnect it before the lightning strikes.

Back in time

Mapping the perils of time travel

With the 'ripple effect', alternate timeline doubles and sometimes just getting the DeLorean to start, time travelling can be a dangerous pastime for those courageous, or foolhardy, enough to brave it…

11 After tracing Biff in 1955 to the Enchantment Under The Sea Dance, where the earlier time-travelling Marty is also in attendance, Marty avoids changing anything else and prises the *Almanac* from his nemesis with a little help from his trusty hoverboard. Biff ends up buried under a truck full of manure, again, so it's mission accomplished. That is until Doc is struck by lightning and, thanks to the malfunctioning flux capacitor, gets zapped back to 1885.

3 Inadvertently changing the course of history and preventing his parents from meeting, Marty has to rectify the situation ensuring his mum and dad get together, otherwise he will be deleted from existence. Helped by the Doc from the Fifties, Marty harnesses the force of a lightning bolt, which famously struck the clock tower, to power the DeLorean's flux capacitor and get back to 1985-2.

2 The Doc upsets a group of Libyan terrorists after he used their stolen plutonium to build a time machine rather than their bomb. While escaping from the machine gun and bazooka-toting terrorists, who turn up at the soon-to-be Lone Pine Mall as Doc is demonstrating his newly-devised time-machine, Marty jumps into the DeLorean, hits 88mph and lands himself in 1955.

1 The 'world's first time traveller', Einstein, travels forward exactly one minute in the parking lot of the Twin Pines Mall, in front of the Doc and a baffled Marty McFly.

4 Saved from being killed by the Libyans in 1985 by a letter Marty wrote in 1955, Doc Brown takes the DeLorean for a little sightseeing, checking himself and Marty out in the future. However, he is shocked by the surprises 2015 has in store and he returns to 1985 to pick up Marty and Jennifer to put it right.

5 Now settled in the Reagan-era personifying 1985-2 where George McFly is a published author with Biff as his lackey, Marty thinks his life is looking up. That is until the Doc turns up. Cue a jump into the now-flying DeLorean and a jaunt to 2015 to sort out his future.

6 One hoverboard chase round Hill Valley later and Marty's stopped his son from committing the crime that would've proceeded to tear the family apart. Saving his kids' future wasn't enough though, and he buys a copy of *Grays Sports Almanac* for a little time-travel-aided betting back in 1985.

KEY
- Doc
- Marty
- Jen, Doc, Marty
- Biff
- Doc, Marty
- Einstein

1885

1850 Hill Valley is founded.
1885 Hill Valley's famous courthouse clock is started.
1886 The railroad bridge over Clayton ravine is completed.

1955

1923 Grays, the future publishers of the *Sports Almanac*, is started.
1937 Biff Tannen is born.
1938 Marty's parents George McFly and Lorraine Baines are born.
1955 Doc Brown slips off the toilet while hanging a clock and wakes with a vision of the flux capacitor.
1956 Lynn Estates, the McFly's future home, is completed.
1958 Chuck Berry records *Johnny B Goode*.
1968 Marty and Jennifer are born.
1973 Ito Fujitsu, Marty's future boss, is born.
1976 8-year-old Marty sets fire to the living room carpet.
1981 The DeLorean is first manufactured.
1982 Pepsi Free is first introduced.

1985-2

2001 *Grays Sports Almanac* is published.
2015 *Jaws 19* opens at the cinema.

2015

1985

1985-3

Receiving a letter sent 70 years earlier, Marty finds out Doc is stuck in the old west. Nipping across town to seek help from the Doc's 1955 duplicate, much to his distress, Marty digs out the DeLorean the 1885 Doc buried. 88mph later and he's back in said old west and reunited with his friend. But not before an Indian's misplaced arrow causes all kinds of trouble.

13 Saving his friend from being shot and killed by Buford 'Mad Dog' Tannen, Marty finds himself taking the Doc's place in the firing line. However, that, the lack of fuel for the DeLorean and Doc's newfound love in the shape of schoolteacher Clara Clayton makes his return to 1985 somewhat problematic. A Clint Eastwood-inspired bulletproof vest later, the DeLorean is strapped to the front of a turbo-enhanced locomotive and Marty hits 88mph, making his last journey back to the future.

14 With Doc left in 1885, Marty faces up to the fact he may never see the enigmatic inventor again after the DeLorean is destroyed on the train tracks by an oncoming freight train. Before the dust can settle though, the Doc, with wife Clara and sons Jules and Verne in tow, makes a surprise entrance in a time-travelling and flying locomotive. Marty no longer gets into the automobile accident that ruins his life and so, with the time machine destroyed, his and Jennifer's future is unwritten.

10 Doc tracks Marty down to the cemetery where McFly Snr is buried and lays down the explanation for the hell they have found themselves in. After discovering the *Almanac*'s empty plastic bag and the top of Biff's cane in the DeLorean, Doc carries out a little investigation revealing the secret of Biff's success. Confronting him, they discover he received the *Almanac* on 12 November 1955, the same day the lightning struck the clock tower. After doing a runner from the now gun-toting Biff and his goons, Marty and Doc head back to 1955 to intercept.

9 Marty and Doc return to 1985 only to find it significantly altered by future Biff's DeLorean-pilfering ways. Aided in no small part by the *Almanac*, 1985-3's Biff has enjoyed Donald Trump-like success. However, his wealth has left Hill Valley a crime-ridden and dilapidated slum. This timeline's Marty has been shipped off to an overseas boarding school but, most outrageously, billionaire Biff has not only murdered Marty's father, he went on to marry his mother too.

8 Arriving back in the Fifties, Biff seeks out his younger self and gives him the *Almanac*, leading him on a very swift path to becoming 'the luckiest man on Earth', winning millions through a series of 'inspired' bets. Returning the DeLorean to 2015 before Marty and Doc notice, old man Biff stumbles away having unwittingly removed himself from the timeline but not before leaving behind vital clues as to his actions. Bleedin' villains they never learn.

7 When Marty and Doc set off to rescue Jennifer, who's been taken by the police back to her future home, Marty gets an eyeful of the sorry state his life could become all because he flies off the handle whenever someone calls him 'chicken'. While they are preoccupied saving Jennifer and avoiding their future doubles, the old Biff nabs the time machine and hightails it back to 1955.

Erased from existence

The problems inherent in (scripting) time travel

Contemporary time-travel theory follows two different schools of thought. Either there is one timeline that constantly changes as the time traveller alters its course, or a new timeline is created as a result of each Einstein-challenging indiscretion and the previous one is destroyed or, as the Doc understatedly puts it, 'erased from existence'. *Back To The Future*, however, melds these two camps of thinking into one (in) comprehensible whole and the fusion of these opposing theories leaves many questions unanswered.

SciFiNow **spoiler alert!** If you hitherto have enjoyed the *Back To The Future* movies and wish to keep it that way, don't read on.

KEY: Forwards / Backwards / "ripple effect"

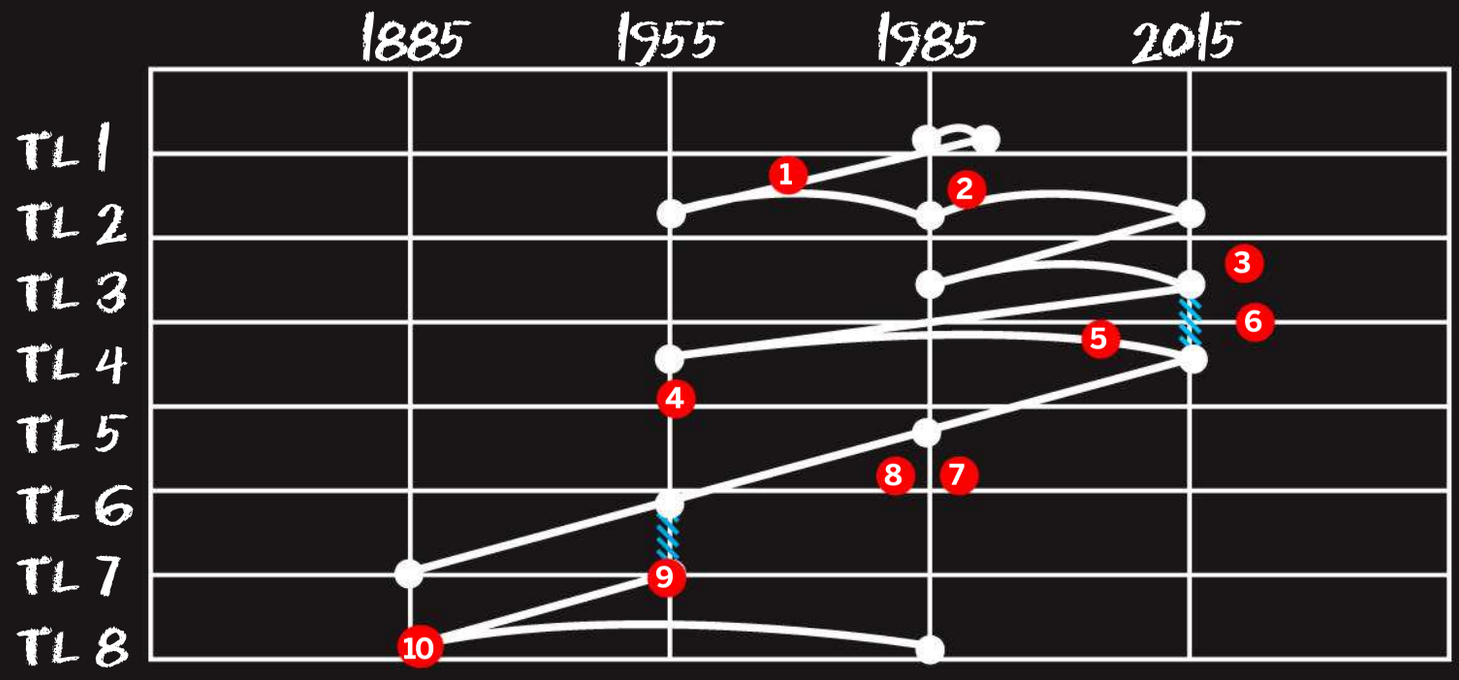
Downbeat ending?
1 If timeline 1 continues unabated and is not destroyed, Marty's family, and Jennifer, are left to continue their lives without him as he never returns to this timeline, instead joining the significantly altered timeline 2.

Theory of the two Martys
2 When Marty returns to the 1985 where his dad is an author and Biff cleans his car, there will already be a Marty there, his double, but when the time-travelling Marty arrives and is mistaken for himself his doppelganger is nowhere to be seen. So does Marty have to 'eliminate' his other self in order to live in this timeline? Will nobody notice the fact he has no idea what has happened in the history of this timeline?

Which Marty?
3 If the time traveller remembers the events from previous timelines, it follows that the old Marty in 2015 would be anticipating the arrival of his younger self. The fact he's totally unaware indicates then that he is an older version of timeline 1's Marty. A theory that is evidenced by the references to Uncle 'Jailbird' Joey.

Destroying the universe
4 The Doc explains that if they were to bump into their future, or past selves, it would cause a paradox that could destroy the universe, yet Biff interacts with his younger self without repercussions. Although, the destruction of the universe couldn't be much worse than a world where Biff is an all-powerful billionaire!

Wrong timeline
5 When Biff jumps back to 1955 he creates a new timeline, timeline 4, so when he returns to 2015 it should be along this timeline yet in the film he returns to timeline 3. A glitch that breaks the film's own rules then, but if he didn't, Marty and the Doc would be stranded in 2015 without the DeLorean.



The Timelines

...as created by the DeLorean

TL1 1985
After Einstein's first trip forward one minute, Marty travels to 1955 creating timeline 2.

TL2 1955
Marty alters his parents' history and thus his family's future before travelling back to 1985. The Doc travels forwards to 2015.

TL3 2015
The Doc returns to 1985 and collects Marty and Jennifer and takes them to 2015. Future Biff steals the time machine and travels back to 1955 creating timeline 4.

TL4 1955
The 'ripple effect' of old Biff's passing of the Almanac to young Biff removes old Biff from the timeline. Marty and Doc travel back to 1985 where timeline 3 is mutating into timeline 4.

TL5 1985
The Doc and Marty discover the alternate 1985 timeline they are in and go back to 1955 to stop it, thus creating timeline 6.

TL6 1955
The DeLorean is struck by lightning, sending the Doc back to 1885 creating timeline 7 onto which Marty is moved by the 'ripple effect'.

TL 7 1955
Unaware he has moved into a different timeline, Marty receives a letter the Doc sent from 1885. He then travels back to 1885 creating the final timeline.

TL8 1885
Marty saves the Doc and then returns to 1985 along the same timeline.

Grandfather paradox
6 If old Biff's time-travelling removes him from the future timeline, it would be impossible for the older Biff to return to 1955 and give his younger self the Almanac. One of the film's many 'grandfather paradoxes', but, since this is a reason time travel is deemed impossible, we'll let them off!

Two Jens
7 There are two Jennifers in 1985 when Marty and the Doc leave their Jennifer on the porch, the one they leave there and the one already there. When they accomplish their mission and retrieve the *Almanac* then the 'ripple effect' that alters the timeline must combine these two Jennifers, or perhaps the missing Jen is just simply erased.

Parallel theories
8 When the timeline changes, Jennifer is left unaltered, even so far as keeping her memories of the previous timelines and the 'you're fired' fax despite not being present at the timeline crossroads like Marty and Doc. The parallel timeline theory also comes unstuck here as there was no way for her to move between the timelines as the DeLorean was elsewhere.

Atomic cowboy
9 As the Doc does not remember that he was the one to dress Marty as the 'atomic cowboy', it follows that he only remembers the events of his timeline, from his point of view, again undermining Jennifer's cross-timeline recollections.

Deux-Loreans
10 When Marty retrieves the stashed DeLorean in 1955 and travels back to 1885, there are now two DeLoreans in the old west, the one he travels in and the one the Doc buried. So why could he not get the gas from this buried DeLorean to fuel the recently arrived machine back to 1985?

Infinite and beyond

As the time traveller recalls the events from previous timelines it is conceivable that there are an infinite number of timelines, or personal timelines, and that time as a concept is merely an abstraction dependent upon the point of view. In this case, the POV is Marty's and so it is from here that we follow the proceedings. But then again...

IN 1989, TWO YOUNG HIGH SCHOOLERS STEPPED BACK IN TIME AND INTO MOVIE HISTORY. JOIN US AS WE MAKE A MOST TRIUMPHANT JOURNEY TO SAN DIMAS TO REMEMBER HOW BILL AND TED TAUGHT US ABOUT WORLD HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, RESPONSIBILITY AND BEING EXCELLENT TO EACH OTHER…

BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

Film

RUNNING TIME: 90 minutes
RELEASE DATE: 17 February 1989
DIRECTOR: Stephen Herek
WRITERS: Chris Matheson, Ed Solomon
CAST: Keanu Reeves, Alex Winter, George Carlin

About

Bill and Ted are two amiable high schoolers in the California suburb of San Dimas who dream of becoming rock stars with their band, the Wyld Stallyns. However, they're flunking history, and if they don't ace their final presentation they'll both get Fs and Ted will be sent to military school. Thankfully, help from the future is on its way, as future-dweller Rufus arrives to lend the boys his time machine. Can they gather all the figures from history that they need, bring them back to the present day and put on a show that will save the future?

"All we are is dust in the wind, dude." In the pantheon of Eighties comedies, *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* stands alone. There's none of the motormouth consumerist swagger of Ferris Bueller or the whispered joys of conformity to be found in John Hughes' high school tales. Bill S Preston Esquire (Alex Winter) and Ted 'Theodore' Logan (Keanu Reeves) stand apart because their amiable cluelessness is not a front. They are aware of their limitations, but they know these can be overcome. Their goals aren't unreasonable and their dreams aren't selfish. There's no ulterior motive behind Bill and Ted's message of "Be excellent to each other"; they're simply excellent people.

The scene in which we first meet Bill and Ted demonstrates why they work so well as a duo. "Ted," begins Bill, "while I agree that, in time, our band will be most triumphant, the truth is Wyld Stallyns will never be a super band until we have Eddie Van Halen on guitar." "Yes, Bill," counters Ted. "But, I do not believe we will get Eddie Van Halen until we have a triumphant video." "Ted, it's pointless to have a triumphant video before we even have decent instruments," Bill replies. "Well, how can we have decent instruments when we don't really even know how to play?" asks Ted. "That is why we need Eddie Van Halen!" answers Bill. "And that is why we need a triumphant video!" agrees Ted, and they shout "Excellent!" in unison. With a few short lines of dialogue, Bill and Ted are established as dreamers who have some grasp of the real world, but not enough to keep them from a joyful state for very long. Other films relegate these characters to second fiddle or even further into the background, assuming that teen audiences want a sensitive popular kid or a street-smart wise-ass to lead their comedies. Those films are wrong.

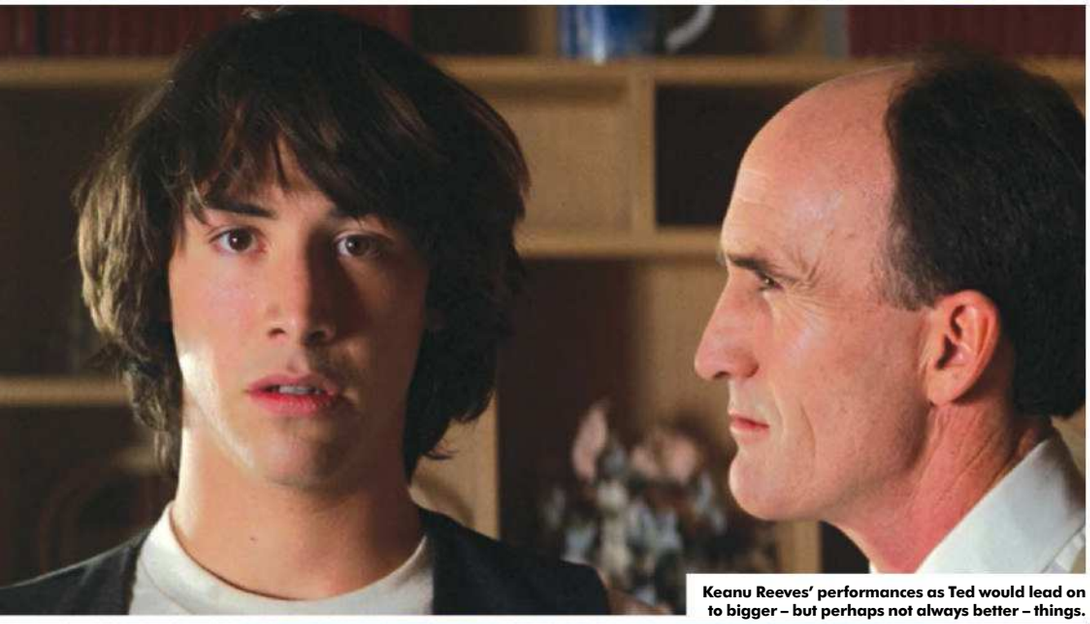
It's hard to think of teen comedy leads who are as entirely lovable as Bill and Ted. Every detail about them is perfect, from their self-made band T-shirts to the slang-heavy dialogue that has, rather than dating, become something close to poetry. They're beautifully performed by Winter and Reeves, so much so that there's a good chance that any bad review the latter receives will compare him to Ted Logan. A lot of their charm is in the writing. They're not cynical or arrogant, and they work hard to achieve their goals. There's not even an element of pulling the wool over anyone's eyes with their presentation of some of history's most important figures. They went and got them, and here they are.

> "IT'S HARD TO THINK OF TEEN COMEDY LEADS WHO ARE AS LOVABLE AS BILL AND TED"

In fairness, the hardships they encounter are never too serious. They're nearly executed in medieval England, although the moment in which Bill thinks Ted has been killed is far more effective, allowing Winter to deliver a most triumphant soliloquy. "Bogus! Heinous! Most non-triumphant! Ah, Ted, don't be dead, dude." However, when our leads are this likeable, frankly we don't want them to be put through too much.

These aren't characters who should be confronted with any real trauma. Their natural state is one of wonder, amazement and joy, and sending them back through time is simply genius. In a time when *Doctor Who*'s wibbly wobbly timey wimey-ness has been replaced with great reams of paradox-threatening bullshit, the explanation that Bill and Ted get from Rufus (George Carlin) feels like a blessed relief. As the phone box travels through time, Rufus explains the white tubes as "The circuits of history," which will take them anywhere that they want to go. When Bill asks how, Rufus simply responds "Modern technology, William." When their plans to resolve their problems from the future work out, we're as pleased as they are. They express wonder at the places and times they visit, even if it is filtered through terms and ideas they understand. Ted describes Greece in 400 BCE as "a time when most of the world looked like the cover of the Led Zeppelin album, *Houses Of The Holy*." "We were there," adds Bill "There were many steps and columns. It was most tranquil."

However, we shouldn't assume that *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* is as dumb as its two main characters (who, quite frankly, aren't quite as thick as they appear to be). The script from Chris Matheson and Ed Solomon is carefully constructed, creating



Keanu Reeves' performances as Ted would lead on to bigger – but perhaps not always better – things.

CLASSIC QUOTES

"TED, YOU AND I HAVE WITNESSED MANY THINGS, BUT NOTHING AS BODACIOUS AS WHAT JUST HAPPENED"
BILL

"THIS IS A DUDE WHO, 700 YEARS AGO, TOTALLY RAVAGED CHINA, AND WHO, WE WERE TOLD, TWO HOURS AGO, TOTALLY RAVAGED OSHMAN'S SPORTING GOODS"
TED

"IT SEEMS TO ME THE ONLY THING YOU'VE LEARNED IS THAT CAESAR IS A 'SALAD DRESSING DUDE'"
MR RYAN

"BOGUS. HEINOUS. MOST NON-TRIUMPHANT. AH, TED, DON'T BE DEAD, DUDE"
BILL

"BILLY, YOU ARE DEALING WITH THE ODDITY OF TIME TRAVEL WITH THE GREATEST OF EASE"
BILL

"SO, BILL, WHAT YOU'RE TELLING ME, ESSENTIALLY, IS THAT NAPOLEON WAS A SHORT DEAD DUDE"
MR RYAN

"TED, WHILE I AGREE THAT, IN TIME, OUR BAND WILL BE MOST TRIUMPHANT. THE TRUTH IS, WYLD STALLYNS WILL NEVER BE A SUPER BAND UNTIL WE HAVE EDDIE VAN HALEN ON GUITAR"
BILL

a world in which reality hovers at the edges. We're shown what real stupidity looks like as jock Ox delivers his history presentation. "Everything is different, but the same… things are more moderner than before… bigger, and yet smaller… it's computers… San Dimas High School football rules!"

It's not too difficult to see why Bill and Ted seek out a blissful fantasy in which they are rock gods: the real world presents too much of a threat to their happiness. Bill's dad is married to Missy ("I mean… Mom"), a gorgeous young woman who's only a couple of years older than her stepson – Ted even asked her to prom once. In one of the film's most unsettling scenes, Mr Preston (J Patrick McNamara) ignores his son to stare at his young bride before ushering Bill and Ted out of the room to undoubtedly consummate his marriage on his son's bed. It's perhaps less of a problem than military school, but no less creepy.

"SOCRATES IS PERHAPS THE BIGGEST REVELATION AS BILLY THE KID'S WINGMAN"

The problems that haunt Bill and Ted's psyches would be explored in more nightmarish detail in the admittedly superior sequel, *Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey*, but the clue to the films' separate agendas is in the titles. The strange things that are afoot at the Circle K are excellent indeed, and this goes for the historical figures that the duo abduct. Billy the Kid (Dan Shor) is a genial con artist who proves to a helpful ally after Bill and Ted rescue him from an angry mob. "Billy, you are dealing with the oddity of time travel with the greatest of ease!" While Abraham Lincoln (Robert Barron), Sigmund Freud (Rod Loomis) and Beethoven (Clifford David) conform to stereotype, Matheson and Solomon's script has some fun with the other passengers.

Genghis Khan (Al Leong)'s appetite for destruction is now fuelled by the excellent sugar high delivered by Twinkies. Joan of Arc (played by The Go-Go's guitarist Jane Wiedlin) is struck by an aerobics display and tells Bill and Ted that she will implement a similar regimen for her armies back in France. Socrates (Tony Steedman) is perhaps the biggest revelation, acting as Billy the Kid's wingman while chatting up two girls in the mall before cackling at Freud's attempts at a come-on: "Geek!"

All these historical figures are given their own endearing characteristics, and they

"STRANGE THINGS ARE AFOOT"

5 most Ted-like Keanu Reeves performances

BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA

1 Keanu is perfectly cast as nice-but-dim Jonathan Harker, stirring in his awful English accent to Francis Ford Coppola's over-rich pudding.

JOHNNY MNEMONIC

2 Here, he is the calm centre of this misjudged shitstorm of a William Gibson adaptation, which starred Dolph Lundgren, Henry Rollins, Ice-T and a dolphin.

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

3 Reeves counter-balances Al Pacino's frothy ranting with cool professionalism as a Florida attorney who realises that his new boss is actually Satan.

Bill and Ted's journey through time sees them pick up an array of historical figures.

Joan of Arc was memorably played by The Go Go's guitarist Jane Wiedlin.

all go along with Bill and Ted quite happily. Fittingly, Napoleon (Terry Camilleri) stands apart. He's the first figure that they abduct, and Ted decides to leave him in the hands of his younger brother Deacon (Frazier Bain), who promptly ditches him at the bowling alley. "Deacon, do you realise you have just stranded one of Europe's greatest leaders in San Dimas?" asks Ted. "He was a dick!" Deacon responds, as confirmed by his behaviour at Waterloo waterpark.

A character who is far more deserving of our respect is, of course, Rufus. The time-travelling, self-described professional is given the perfect level of laid-back charm by the late great Carlin. Rufus has the dash of self-awareness necessary for any character who addresses the audience directly, but it's balanced by a real love and admiration for the two kids he's been sent back to help out. If *Bill & Ted 3* ever actually happens – and Winter and Reeves seem to be convinced that it will – the film will have a big Carlin-shaped hole.

Rufus' closing statement to the audience, "They do get better," is a nice concession to the audience, but it also reaffirms what makes Bill and Ted so charming. Although they ace their history report, not too much has changed for the two. They do have their historical babes, who join their band, but they're not suddenly rich or famous or even talented; they are still in the garage trying their best to become better musicians. They're still having an excellent time, and they still have each other. "The only true wisdom comes from knowing you know nothing," quotes Bill from 'So-crates'. "That's us, dude!" exclaims Ted. Most triumphant, indeed.

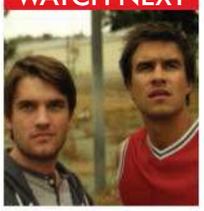
BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE is available on Blu-ray from DEG

WATCH FIRST

BACK TO THE FUTURE (1985)

Robert Zemeckis' classic was such a huge influence on the film that Rufus' time machine was initially a car.

WATCH NEXT



JOHN DIES AT THE END (2012)

Two slackers are forced to face a Lovecraftian apocalypse and save mankind in Don Coscarelli's ambitious genre mash.

YOUR TAKE ON THE CLASSIC

WHAT YOU THOUGHT @SCIFINOW

"Still bodacious, dude! The Police Station/Bin/Keys bit was obviously an influence on a young timey wimey Steven Moffat!" **@iutley73**

"Changed time travel rules in films since (eg *Frequency*) and best ethos of "be excellent to each other"." **@Christi77974829**

"It's a true product of it's time, and that's reason why it remains so endearing to a lot of people. Cult Classic? Definitely" **@AaronDarlington**

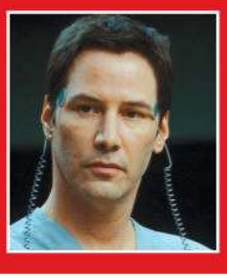
"It's still most excellent but I think it's safe to say they're vision of the future looks quite twee these days." **@Tim_M_Matthews**

"Most triumphant! Forever and always!" **@catcatcatswag**

THE MATRIX

4 His Neo is the perfect confused audience identification point for the Wachowskis' sci-fi action classic. "I know kung-fu" aside, he even does the "Whoah!"

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL



5 Reeves is cannily cast by Scott Derrickson in the 2008 remake's version of Klaatu; a blank slate who may or may not be benign. Shame about the film.

STAR WARS EPISODE V: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

The Complete Guide

Darker, weightier and essentially an extended unresolved middle act, the sequel to one of SF's most beloved films was, on paper, a risky proposition. We delve into the story of one of the greatest sequels ever made

Do or do not, there is no try!

It was 1978 and a full year since the release of one of sci-fi's most influential movies. *Star Wars* was a global phenomenon touching the lives and imaginations of people everywhere. Yet even at this point, with *Star Wars*' monumental success, Lucas had not yet achieved his dream of full autonomy from the Hollywood studio system, which would give him his creative freedom. The money from the merchandise for *Star Wars* was Lucas's only profit from the movie, a not insubstantial amount but still not enough and certainly at that point in time not as much as 20th Century Fox was taking from ticket sales. Lucas still had the rights to sequels and the characters, something Fox had originally considered worthless when it agreed in exchange for profit from *Star Wars* and it was this he would exploit to full effect to achieve his goals.

When the full force of *Star Wars*' success became apparent, 20th Century Fox approached Lucas about making a sequel. After Fox Studio's interference on the previous movie, Lucas was adamant that this new film would be solely under his control. "It was the perfect opportunity to become independent of the Hollywood system," he revealed, "I didn't mind releasing it through them, but it was going to them for the money and having them saying 'I like the script but I want a change' or 'the film is good but we want to make these changes'. I wanted to avoid that!"

Lucas turned down Fox money and sought to finance the film solely by himself, ensuring the production remained under his control away from studio interference. Using the money earned from *Star Wars* thus far and securing a large bank loan, Lucas assembled the projected $25 million budget. It was a brave move, even with the success of the original film, it did not automatically equal success for the sequel. "The rule in Hollywood is never put your own money in any film, even your own film," smiles *Empires* un-credited co-producer Howard Kazanjian, "…it was a gamble, but it was a gamble [Lucas] knew would pay off."

Having drafted out so much back story for *Star Wars* during its early production stages, Lucas began writing a new *Star Wars* story that would eventually become the backbone for a sequel. At this point, the movie was untitled, co-producer Gary Kurtz would eventually come up with the name, Lucas asked the

JUDGE ME BY MY SIZE YOU DO?

Building a better Jedi Master

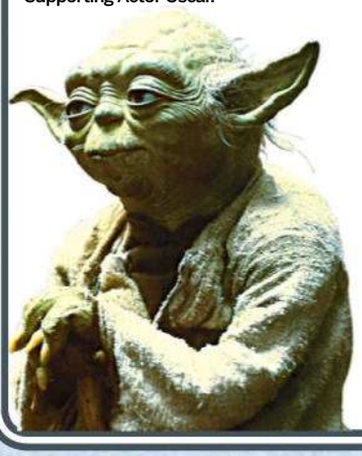
Due to the need to create further dramatic drive in *A New Hope*, George Lucas had killed off Obi Wan Kenobi. This left *Empire Strikes Back* with a problem: if Luke was to continue his training. Who would teach the nascent Jedi? So the character of Yoda was created, envisioned by Lucas as wise mystic and one of Obi Wan Kenobi's tutors.

The minuscule Jedi Master was described in a number of different ways depending on the script draft, varying in height from extremely tall to wizened and small. The diminutive size was eventually settled upon and the concept artists then began their work.

Designs ranged from lanky blue elfin creatures, to something that looked like a cross between George Lucas and a garden gnome, including a pointy hat and fishing rod. Eventually a design by Stuart Freeborn was settled upon. Freeborn's design was a combination of self-portrait and 'wisdom wrinkles' copied from a photograph of Albert Einstein.

To make Yoda work, Lucas called up close friend Jim Henson and asked if the Muppet master's company would physically realise the character. It was a big risk for the production; if Yoda felt like a Muppet or drew comparisons with Kermit The Frog, the character was dead. It was Henson himself who recommended Frank Oz to Lucas, as one of Henson's finest puppeteers to vocalise and operate the Jedi.

Oz's performance was so good that Lucas spent thousands and thousands of dollars trying to get the performer nominated for a Supporting Actor Oscar.



"Star Wars was a phenomenon that touched the lives and imaginations of people everywhere"

No Disintegrations

A spotter's guide to Bounty Hunters

Boba Fett
The clone 'son' of the bounty hunter Jango Fett, Boba learnt many of his skills from his father before Jango's death at the battle of Geonosis. After this, Fett entered the service of Jabba the Hutt and later Darth Vader, earning notoriety as the best bounty hunter in the galaxy.

Dengar
A Corellian swoop racer who, in his youth, suffered a horrific accident during a race. Dengar was rebuilt with cybernetic components by agents of the newly formed Empire. The implants deliberately robbed Dengar of any human emotions, making him the perfect killer.

IG-88
One of four assassin droids ever made, IG-88 was the first one activated. It massacred the scientists that created it, then transferred its consciousness to the remaining three droids. Although IG-88's function is bounty hunting, all four are working towards a Droid revolution.

4-LOM
A protocol droid aboard a luxury liner, 4-LOM acted as translator between the ship and its passengers. Then the droid grew bored and began a crime spree. He left the ship and went to work for Jabba the Hutt who reprogrammed 4-LOM for bounty hunting.

Bossk
A fearsome reptilian Trandoshan, Bossk is ideally suited to the role of bounty hunting. Trandoshans are able to re-grow lost limbs and believe in a god known as the Scorekeeper who rewards successful kills in the afterlife. These factors make their vicious nature unsurprising.

Zuckuss
A bounty hunter from the Gand system, Zuckuss was known in hunter circles as 'the uncanny one' due to his ability to find the most thoroughly hidden bounty mark. This ability was due to an innate sensitivity to The Force, so Zuckuss could sense feelings and motives at range.

C3PO is as useless as ever in *Empire Strikes Back*.

noted screenwriter Leigh Bracket to write the screenplay based upon his story. Bracket was a respected author and screenwriter who had worked on classic film noir movies such as *Big Sleep* and *The Long Goodbye*. She completed the first draft in February 1978 shortly before dying of cancer a month later.

Lucas was reportedly unhappy with Bracket's treatment and subsequently hired screenwriter Lawrence Kasdan to work on the successive drafts. Kasdan's involvement was due in no small part to his treatment of Lucas's story for *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*, which happened to be in development at the same time. Lucas worked with Kasdan on the redrafts but would ultimately let the writer, along with Bracket, take the credit for the final screenplay.

It is a matter of much discussion to this day exactly how much of Bracket's initial draft remains. Many claim Bracket's influence is clearly in the 'noirish' dialogue exchanges between Han Solo and Princess Leia. Writer Laurent Bouzereau in his book *Star Wars: The Annotated Screenplays* claims that Lucas disliked the direction Brackets script took with his story so much that he discarded the whole script, crediting Bracket out of courtesy and respect for the work she had done during the final stages of her illness.

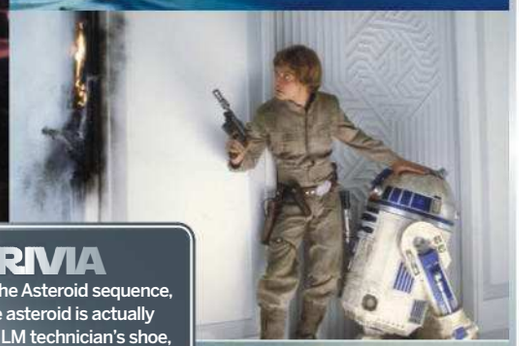
With the script in a workable form after several drafts, one actually titled *Star Wars Episode II*, Lucas's thoughts turned towards the production. When it came to the production itself, Lucas decided after the near-fatal experience of directing the original *Star Wars* that he no longer wanted any part of directing.

"I hate directing," he told *Rolling Stone* magazine at the time "It's like fighting a 15-round heavyweight bout with a new opponent every day. You go to work knowing just how you want the scene to be, but by the end of the day, you're usually depressed because you didn't do a good enough job."

His solution was to act as producer and hire a director to do the fighting for him. The director he chose was Irving Kershner. Kershner, who had been one of Lucas's lecturers at University of Southern California Film School, refused the role when he was initially offered it. "Of all the younger guys around, all ➪

TRIVIA
In a number of script drafts, Yoda's full name is given as Minch Yoda

The Lone Rider pitch wasn't successful.

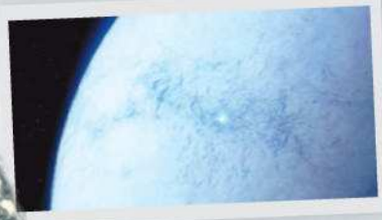


TRIVIA
In the Asteroid sequence, one asteroid is actually an ILM technician's shoe, while another is a potato

Design flaws abound in Empire tech.

Location, Location, Location

The new worlds of Empire Strikes Back



Hoth

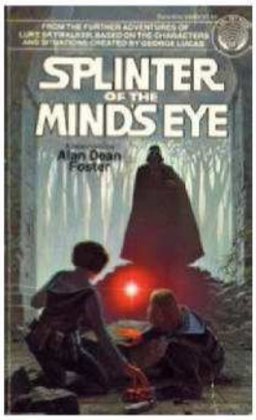
A hostile frozen world on the galactic outer rim, far from any trade route, makes a great hiding place. Brutal temperatures mean that all life is driven underground and any equipment must be adapted to work in such an extreme environment.

Dagobah

A lush jungle world in the Sluis sector far out on the edge of outer rim, Dagobah is overrun with life in many forms, most of it as primitive and hostile as the rest of the world. Dagobah is practically primordial. It's essentially a huge humid swampland with almost 88 per cent surface water and no native sentient life.

Bespin

Bespin is a rich source of tibanna gas that is used in the production of blasters. Unlike most gas giants, who have uninhabitable atmospheres, Bespin has an oxygen layer 150-to-180km below the surface called the Bespin Life Zone where mining colonies such as Cloud City and Tibannopolis are established.



STAR WARS 1.5

We take a look at the sequel that never was

Splinter In The Mind's Eye has the dubious distinction of being the first full-length novel in the *Star Wars* 'Expanded Universe' (EU). Written by Alan Dean Foster, who had previously ghostwritten the original *Star Wars* novelisation, *Splinter* tells the story of Luke and Leia crash landing on the planet Mimban discovering a secret Imperial mining facility. Investigating, the heroes discover a latent Jedi who claims to know the whereabouts of a Kaiburr crystal, a gem that has the powers to magnify The Force. So begins a quest to find the crystal, with a recently arrived Darth Vader in hot pursuit.

Fully endorsed by Lucas at the time, *Splinter* was written to fulfil Foster's writing contract and to act as a basis for a cheap TV movie sequel to *A New Hope*, should it fail at the box office. With hindsight, the book has glaring continuity errors. Luke facing Vader for the first time and defeating him in a saber duel (severing his human arm in the process) is the most obvious example. The story also has a queasily overt sexual tension between Luke and Leia. This is something many detractors point out when discussing Lucas's claims he had the series mapped out, especially when, according to Foster, Lucas's only change to the manuscript was having Luke and Leia shot down in a dogfight.

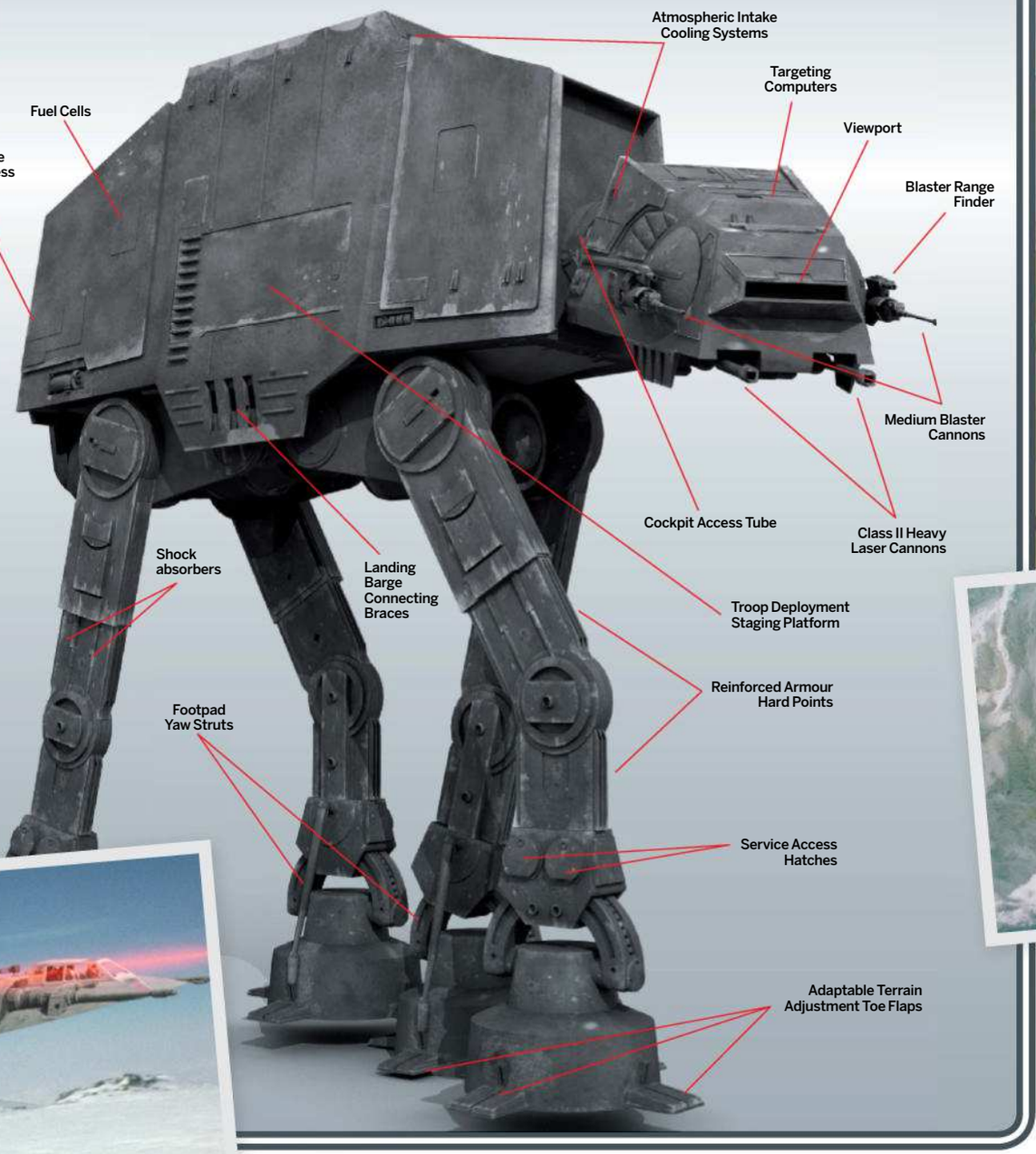
Before the book's release, *Star Wars* broke box office records and with the rapid development of *Empire*, plans for a big-screen adaptation were thankfully abandoned.

We've spotted Imperial Walkers!

Know what's what on the AT-AT

Designed by Kuat Drive Yards to "favour fear over function", the All Terrain Armoured Transport (AT-AT) certainly accomplishes its design brief exceptionally well. Standing at 22.5 metres tall (73 feet) and requiring three crew to pilot, the AT-AT is a terrifying leviathan. Impervious to all but the heaviest turbo-laser fire or carefully placed cable, AT-ATs are able to withstand tremendous beatings while deploying up to 40 troopers and five speeder bikes in to the heart of a battle. Often referred to as "walkers", the name is a misnomer as the AT-AT's legs can be replaced with environment-specific mobilisation methods.

© AT-AT 3D Model by Dejardin Bertrand. Image by Lee Medcalf.



Snowspeeders may be the Skodas of the future, but the harpoons are handy.

Boba Fett's ship, on the other hand, is damn cool.

the hot-shots, why me?" he apparently asked Lucas. He replied, "Well, because you know everything a Hollywood director is supposed to know, but you're not Hollywood."

Kershner was still unconvinced, wanting no part of something as big as *Star Wars* and having no prior experience with visual FX, which made him nervous. Eventually Lucas tried further convincing Kershner that he would not interfere and that Kershner would have full control over the production while Lucas oversaw the editing and FX work by ILM in the States. Kershner's agent eventually made him take the job after Kershner informed him over the phone of the offer Lucas had made, telling the director he would be crazy not to do it.

With Kershner in place, he, Lucas and Gary Kurtz set about assembling the cast and crew, including many former *Star Wars* alumni such as Editor Paul Hirch, production designer Norman Reynolds, conceptual designer Ralph McQuarrie, Stuart Freeborn make-up supervisor, costume designer John Mollo and composer John Williams. Of these, Williams, Reynolds, and Mollo had won Academy Awards for their work on *Star Wars* that year.

The principal actors all returned to the roles, but with one notable exception: Alec Guinness, who was to return as Obi Wan Kenobi. Guinness was recovering from an eye operation when the movie production started and his availability was in some doubt. It would only be towards the end of shooting that the actor would finally be well enough to appear as the ghostly apparition of the fallen Jedi.

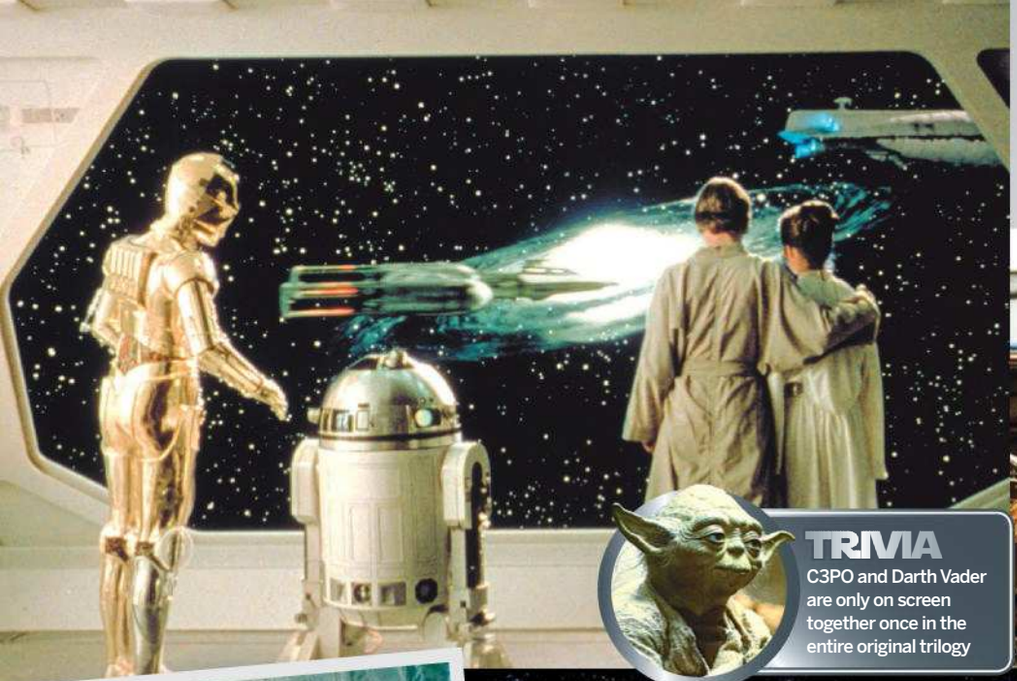
Additional casting problems occurred around Mark Hamill. Hamill had suffered facial damage due to a car accident the year before shooting. Gone was the youthful heroic looks and many on the production team were worried about this, which led to the urban legend that the Wampa sequences were written in to account for the scarring. The truth, according to both Lucas and Kershner, was that they did not care. Lucas admitted the scene helped, but ultimately reasoned that Luke had been in the wars occurring between *New Hope* and *Empire* and was battle scarred.

With cast and crew assembled, on 5 March 1979 shooting commenced in Finse, a remote mountain between Oslo and Bergen in Norway on *The Empire Strikes Back*.

For the returning members of cast and crew there must have been distinct feelings of déjà vu when immediately everything started to go wrong, from the first day onwards. Finse, a resort for cross-country skiing, which would double for the

TRIVIA

Principal photography took 170 days, making it the longest shoot of any of the *Star Wars* movies



TRIVIA
C3PO and Darth Vader are only on screen together once in the entire original trilogy

Wampas often struggle to make friends.

ice planet Hoth, was a hostile environment at the best of times suffered its worst snowstorm in over 50 years. Temperatures dropped to - 29 °C and 18 feet of snowfall settled on the first scheduled day of shooting. The extreme cold caused mechanical issues with the cameras and animatronic Tauntauns that would rapidly freeze and stop working, and required continual pauses for the technicians to thaw them out. One day the snowfall was so heavy the snowed-in crew could not leave the hotel. With the deadline already starting to slip away so early in production, Kershner's solution was to get Mark Hamill to stumble around in the blizzard while the cameras shot footage through the window of the hotel lobby. More problems beset the crew, with the area effectively cut off for several days by avalanches that severed rail links and buried the arctic survival camp that was to house the second unit crew.

Back in England at Elstree film studios things were not going well either. A fire on stage 3, which had housed Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* caused further scheduling headaches. With the stage gutted, Kubrick took over two remaining free stages, effectively blocking *Empire*'s shoot until he was finished. The studio was full and construction on the purpose-built '*Star Wars* Stage' would not be operational until May. In the meantime the production worked on every available inch of free space around the lot, taking over areas that Kubrick was no longer using wherever possible. By now, it was clear that with the fire and adverse conditions in Norway, the movie was severely behind schedule.

Once the *Star Wars* stage came online, the huge football-pitch sized area became four full-sized sets, the Dagobah swamplands, the cool interiors of Cloud City, the carbon freeze chambers and Hoth base main hangar, which housed a full-sized Millennium Falcon.

"Guinness was recovering from an eye operation when production started"

It was the first and only time in the Saga's production history the Falcon existed as a fully constructed 1:1 scale prop and set. Engineers at Pembroke Docks in Wales built it in a hanger originally used for constructing Sunderland flying boats. Weighing over 40 tons, the Falcon was broken in to 16 pieces before reconstruction at Elstree on top of compressed air pads that acted like hovercrafts, enabling the massive ship to be floated around the stage as required.

TRIVIA
Billy Dee Williams (Lando Calrissian) had previously auditioned for the role of Han Solo in *A New Hope*

In the States, Lucas oversaw the visual effects produced by the team at ILM, who were suffering difficulties too, compositing white ships on the snow-white footage, making it difficult to hide black matte lines; this was overcome after lengthy technical research resulted in a process known as 'White matting'. Lucas also oversaw the editing of the movie as the footage came in from Norway and England. Rarely did he ever become directly involved in the overseas production, trusting Kershner even when the shoot fell further and further behind schedule.

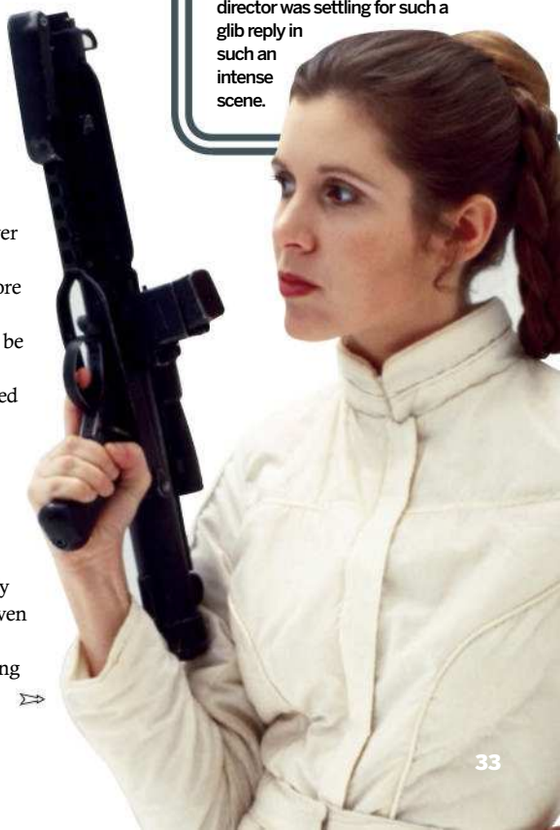
Eventually the delays proved costly, with Lucas having to secure a further $10 million. After the increasingly

LINES OF FORCE

The stories behind two of Empire's most iconic quotes

Ask anyone to quote a line from *Empire* and the odds are that Vader's "I am your father!" line will be the first one mentioned. But at the time of filming the scene no one knew that line existed. In a bid to keep the secret from leaking out, all scripts, barring Mark Hamill's, had a false page with Vader's line "Obi Wan killed your father!" to be spoken on set by Dave Prowse. Irvin Kershner directed Prowse to act in a way that, when overdubbed, the actions matched the dialogue. Until the movie premier, only Lucas, Kershner, Hamill and Jones knew the truth; even up till that point Jones confessed when he read the line his reaction was "Oh he's lying".

Another iconic moment is the Leia's confession of love for Han Solo in the carbon freeze chamber and Han's intense reply "I know". Originally, Han's response was "I love you too" but Ford and Kershner were not happy with it. Both felt the line wasn't true to Solo's character. After a day of takes, Kershner asked Ford to ad lib on the spot. The result was the classic "I know". Immediately Kershner called a wrap, sensing that this was on the money despite protests from members of the crew who couldn't believe the director was settling for such a glib reply in such an intense scene.



Shock and Awe

Countdown of the greatest moments of Episode V

1

No, I am your father!

Just when you thought things couldn't get any more bleak for our hero, Vader delivers a verbal sucker punch to both Luke and the audience. Despite the sequels spinning off from this single line, watering down the shock, it still stands as a truly classic movie moment.

Never tell me the odds

2 We all suspected that Han was a badass pilot, but we'd not seen proof. Yet as he races the Falcon headlong into a dense asteroid belt with a devilish grin, suddenly there's no doubt.

Clash of Lightsabers

3 "The Force is with you young Skywalker... but you are not a Jedi yet!" hisses Darth Vader's menacing silhouette. This marks the beginning of one of the best Saber duels of the original trilogy.

We've spotted Imperial Walkers

4 With the Rebels scrabbling to abandon Echo base, Vader's ground troops arrive. The AT-ATs stomp inexorably closer, the Rebels stand little chance, and suffered an overwhelming defeat by the Empire.

I love you... I know!

5 Leia confesses her love for Han before he is plunged to his doom in Vader's test of the carbon freezing chamber. The understated reply works brilliantly, cementing Solo's coolness forever.

The Finale

6 Kershner leaves the final moments to John Williams' score to tell the story as Lando and Chewie set off in the Falcon to find Han. The camera pulls back on our heroes, creating an iconic cliffhanger.

Attacking the Star Destroyer

7 With no way of escaping the Imperial Star Destroyers in pursuit, Solo plays a game of chicken against a mile-long warship. A thrilling sequence that ends the Imperial pursuit beautifully.

This is no cave!

8 So you've escaped from a besieged death trap, two Star Destroyers, multiple TIE fighters, navigated an asteroid field and found refuge in this cave. What more could go wrong, right? Wrong!

Tree of the Darkside

9 A nightmarish and dreamlike sequence on Dagobah. On one level, it's Luke facing his fears; on another, it's showing Luke potentially falling to the Dark Side and a hint at the Skywalker family lineage.

Lifting the X-Wing

10 Yoda talks big, but when will he put his money where his mouth is? In a scene not as flash as Yoda's showpieces in the prequels, the Jedi shows exactly what he's capable of in this majestic moment.

Like Father Like Son

The link between father and son is traditionally very strong. In the case of the Skywalker men, however, it was so strong they followed almost identical story paths. So what is so different that one becomes the saviour of the universe and the other its doom? **Sci-FiNow** investigates in this handy guide

Luke Skywalker		Anakin Skywalker
<< Tatooine	WHERE DID HE GROW UP?	>> Tatooine
<< Obi Wan Kenobi and Yoda	WHO WERE HIS MENTORS?	>> Obi Wan Kenobi and Yoda
<< No	DID YODA INITIALLY BELIEVE HE COULD BE TRAINED?	>> No
<< Yes	DID YODA CHANGE HIS MIND?	>> Yes
<< Ace Pilot	BEFORE BECOMING A JEDI, WHAT WAS SKYWALKER'S SKILL	>> Ace Pilot
<< Destroyed the Death Star with a single shot	FIRST MAJOR SPACE BATTLE VICTORY	>> Destroyed the Droid Control ship with a single shot
<< Lured in to a trap to rescue his friends and faced Darth Vader	FIRST SITH ENCOUNTER	>> Lured in to a trap to rescue his mate and faced Count Dooku
<< Nope, he fought bravely and lost his Saber hand	WAS HE VICTORIOUS?	>> Nope, he fought bravely and lost his Saber hand
<< Yes	WAS THERE A REMATCH?	>> Yes
<< Yes – but not before the Sith lost a limb	WAS THE SITH LORD DEFEATED?	>> Yes – but not before the Sith lost limbs
<< No	WAS HE CORRUPTED BY PALPATINE, FELL TO THE DARK SIDE AND WENT ON TO SINGLE-HANDEDLY WIPE OUT THE JEDI ORDER?	>> Bugger!

Great effects can make great moments.

Luke's a bit far from Toshi Station now.

TRIVIA

One of the reasons Han was frozen was due to Ford not signing on for any movies at the time

TRIVIA

Irvin Kershner considered dressing up a monkey wearing an animatronic head to play Yoda

"Despite the mixed critical reaction, fans eventually warmed to the film"

nervous bank threatened to pull his loan, Lucas was forced to approach 20th Century Fox. Lucas made a deal with the studio to secure the loan in exchange for paying the studio more money, but without the loss of his sequel and merchandising rights. This caused some tension because Kershner was simply not working fast enough for Lucas. Eventually by mid-September 1979, principal photography was completed. ILM would continue working on *Empire*'s extensive list of 763 visual effect shots for many months after the live shoot wrapped, including developing a method of stop-motion animation known as 'Go motion' to create the iconic AT-AT Hoth battle.

Released 21 May 1980, *Empire Strikes Back* received mixed critical response. Some reviews damned the movie for its incomplete open-ended structure, while others dismissed its attempts at a more mature take on the *Star Wars* universe. To this day, even in adjusted amounts, *Empire Strikes Back* is the lowest-grossing movie of the six. At the time, the darker tone and cliffhanger finale that would not be resolved for over three years, combined with Vader's revelation to Luke, shocked, disappointed and confused many expecting a popcorn *Flash Gordon* SF action hit similar to the original.

Yet despite the initial mixed reaction, fans eventually warmed to the film and with the rights still within his control, the eventual success of the film – the highest grossing movie of 1980 – would make George Lucas and LucasFilm the most powerful force in Hollywood. With epic themes and scope, *Empire* not only established *Star Wars* as a fully fledged saga, but to this day remains the perfect example of a superior sequel and continues to be one of the most highly rated and influential science-fiction movies of all time.

The **STAR WARS: THE COMPLETE SAGA** boxset is available on Blu-ray from LucasFilm

STAR WARS EPISODE VI: RETURN OF THE JEDI FIRST HIT OUR SCREENS AS THE 'LAST' INSTALLMENT, BEFORE EPISODES I-III AND LONG BEFORE EPISODE VII CAME INTO THE PICTURE. PUTTING OUR FRUSTRATION WITH CGI TOUCH-UPS ASIDE, WE LOOK BACK AT THE FIRST FINAL CHAPTER IN STAR WARS HISTORY TO REMEMBER JABBA'S PALACE, LUKE BATTLING THE RANCOR AND THE EWOK SONG…

RETURN OF THE JEDI

Film

RUNNING TIME: 136 minutes
RELEASE DATE: 25 May 1983
DIRECTOR: Richard Marquand
WRITERS: Lawrence Kasdan, George Lucas
CAST: Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Harrison Ford, Billy Dee Williams, Ian McDiarmid

About

In the final chapter of the original *Star Wars* trilogy, Luke, Leia, Lando and Chewbacca must free Han Solo from Jabba the Hutt's palace. After they liberate their friend, the group joins the Rebel forces, where they learn that the Emperor has nearly finished building a second Death Star. They travel to Endor to attempt to lower the station's defences, and discover the home of the Ewok tribe. Han and Leia recruit the furry warriors to join their mission, while Luke resolves to finally confront Darth Vader, the man he now knows to be his father.

Even the best trilogies have a perceived weak link, and if the original *Star Wars* trilogy has a whipping boy it's *Return Of The Jedi*. The second sequel is light on plot, tugs shamelessly at the heartstrings and is almost entirely aimed at a young audience who would demand toy versions of the characters they'd just seen on screen. Compared to the groundbreaking *A New Hope* and the bleak masterpiece that is *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Return Of The Jedi* is the giddy younger brother who's only hanging out with his older siblings because their mum made them take him.

Then, of course, the prequel trilogy happened, and threw *Return Of The Jedi*'s relatively minor faults into perspective. Yes, the Ewoks are basically chittering teddy bears that are given more to do than Harrison Ford in the second half of the film, but they are funny and adorable. Yes, it's pretty much plotless once Luke decides to go after Darth Vader and the Emperor, but the action sequences that fill out the running time are stunning. And yes, it's a little heavier on the treacle than its predecessors, but that sentimentality is earned, because it brings a beloved trilogy to a close and helps us bid a fond farewell to such iconic characters.

Let's start by addressing that sentimentality. While it certainly gets cute and cuddly later on, *Return Of The Jedi* is not without its darker moments. At the film's opening, Han is still imprisoned in carbonite as Jabba the Hutt's favourite bordello decoration. Leia's attempt to rescue him leads to her suffering a similar fate: being encased in a gold bikini and, almost immediately afterwards, the dreams of the film's male audience. Luke's still minus a hand and dealing with the fact that the man he's trying to kill is his own father, and let's not forget that Yoda dies, making him the second successive mentor figure that Luke's lost. The film is savvy enough to know that the bleak ending of *The Empire Strikes Back* couldn't simply be reset; that happy ending has to be earned.

"THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK COULDN'T BE RESET; RETURN OF THE JEDI'S HAPPY ENDING HAS TO BE EARNED"

The very start of the film is where that residual darkness from *The Empire Strikes Back* is most obviously in evidence, and those first 20 to 30 minutes are simply superb. The popular perception of the *Star Wars* universe is that it's this bright, colourful and pristine world, but Jabba's sleazy palace is wonderfully grimy. If you thought the Mos Eisley Cantina was a grubby den of thieves, think again. As we watch Jabba and his court enjoy the show that's provided for him (woefully CGI-ed in the restored version), Richard Marquand definitely makes it understood that you wouldn't want to touch anything here.

The element of danger goes beyond the risk of catching tetanus. From the moment R2-D2 and C3PO are welcomed into the place by the tenticular Bib Fortuna, we know that things aren't going to go smoothly. Sure enough, they're abducted by the crime lord colossus and sent to the basement, where screeching droids are branded and drained of hope. Later, poor dancing girl Oola is dropped into the Rancor pit for turning down Jabba's slithering advances. Finally, Leia's rescue attempt is cruelly curtailed by a simple curtain drop, revealing Jabba and his retinue laughing away at the very idea that the prisoners thought they could escape. While the film's finale boasts more emotional heft, these early sequences reek of foreboding and despair, aided by the infernal harmonising of Jabba's guttural chuckle and Salacious B Crumb's ear-splitting cackle.

Then Luke shows up. Although the despairing Han expresses doubt of his friend's Jedi knighthood ("I'm out of it for a little while and everyone gets delusions of grandeur"), Luke swaggers in with all the confidence in the world. This isn't the same bright-eyed boy who set out looking for adventure; this is a warrior who is fully aware of his power. Not even the Rancor is going to throw him off his stride, as he dispatches the beast by dropping a gate on its head. Even beefy monster trainer Malakili's tears aren't going to bring the beast back.

Which brings us to the action. Richard Marquand might not measure up to original choices David Cronenberg and

YUB NUB, EEE CHOP YUB NUB!

The Ewok Celebration song in full, with translation

Yub nub, eee chop yub nub;
Ah toe meet toe peechee keene,
G'noop dock fling oh ah.

Yahwah, eee chop yahwah;
Ah toe meet toe peechee keene,
G'noop dock fling oh ah.

Coatee cha tu yub nub;
Coatee cha tu yahwah;
Coatee cha tu glowah;
Allay loo ta nuv.

Glowah, eee chop glowah;
Ya glowah pee chu nee foom,
Ah toot dee awe goon daa.

*Coatee cha tu goo; (Yub nub!)
Coatee cha tu doo; (Yahwah!)
Coatee cha tu too; (Ya chaa!)
Allay loo ta nuv,
Allay loo ta nuv,
Allay loo ta nuv.

Glowah, eee chop glowah.
Ya glowah pee chu nee foom
Ah toot dee awe goon daa.

* Coatee cha tu goo; (Yub nub!)
Coatee cha tu doo; (Yahwah!)
Coatee cha tu too; (Ya chaa!)
Allay loo ta nuv,
Allay loo ta nuv,
Allay loo ta nuv,
Allay loo ta nuv.

Freedom, we got freedom;
And now that we can be free,
Come on and celebrate.

Power, we got power;
And now that we can be free,
It's time to celebrate.

Celebrate the freedom;
Celebrate the power;
Celebrate the glory;
Celebrate the love.

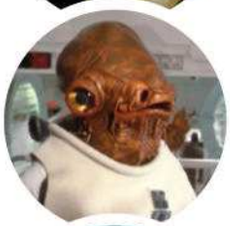
Power, we got power;
And now that we can be free,
It's time to celebrate.

*Celebrate the light; (Freedom!)
Celebrate the might; (Power!)
Celebrate the fight; (Glory!)
Celebrate the love.
Celebrate the love.
Celebrate the love.

Glory, we found glory.
The power showed us the light,
And now we all live free.

*Celebrate the light; (Freedom!)
Celebrate the might; (Power!)
Celebrate the fight; (Glory!)
Celebrate the love.
Celebrate the love.
Celebrate the love.
Celebrate the love.

Although deemed the weakest of the trilogy, ***Return Of The Jedi*** **still contained many of the series' most iconic moments.**



David Lynch (although imagine what they would have done with Jabba's palace), and rumours persist that Lucas had more of a hand in the filmmaking process than he let on, but the film's action sequences are top notch. The battle on and around Jabba's barge above the Sarlacc pit is a thrilling bit of choreography, establishing Luke as a swashbuckling action hero and giving Ford the chance for some physical comedy. Leia gets payback for that metal bikini by choking Jabba to death with her own chains and, let's face it, any battle is better when it's being conducting above a giant maw in the sand. The only criticism to really be made is that Boba Fett's death is a little perfunctory. Dropping the great bounty hunter into the Sarlacc pit seems like a bit of a disservice.

The other great action set piece in *Return Of The Jedi* is, of course, the speeder bike chase through the forests of Endor. Putting aside the issue of how on earth they managed to get through all those trees without crashing, it's a tremendously exciting sequence.

"THE BATTLE ON JABBA'S BARGE ESTABLISHES LUKE AS A SWASHBUCKLING ACTION HERO"

So what about those Ewoks? The cuddly little critters remain a bone of contention among fans, who believe they take up too much screen time and rely on cuteness rather than any interesting attributes but, as Tim Bisley points out to Bilbo Bagshot in *Spaced*, "Jar Jar makes the Ewoks look like… fucking Shaft!" Looking back at the film now, the Ewoks are the element that you might have thought would have dated particularly badly, but they're still as fun as they ever were, and their scenes give Ford and Fisher a welcome opportunity to stretch their comedic muscles.

However, they do take up a very large chunk of the second half of the film, and it's here that the naysayers' arguments ring true. While Luke sets off to face Darth Vader and the Emperor, the rest of the rebels are waiting for Han and Leia to disable the shield surrounding the Death Star Mark II so they can blow it to smithereens, which is about as far as the story stretches in the last hour. It essentially sidelines Han and Leia, although they are still around and firing off some wonderful one-liners. However, although Han giving the keys to the Millennium Falcon to Lando might feel a bit wrong, it not only cements the fact that he is forgiven; it also shows that

INTERFERING WITH A CLASSIC

5 of the worst of George Lucas' alterations to Return of the Jedi

BLINKING EWOKS

As if the Ewoks weren't cute enough, George Lucas gave them the ability to blink. We can't say it was something we particularly missed, so we can only imagine it was an effort to make them more adorable. We won't comment on whether it worked.

T KENNY BAKER WAS ORIGINALLY SUPPOSED TO PLAY WICKET THE EWOK, BUT WASN'T WELL ENOUGH. WARWICK DAVIS REPLACED HIM.

THE CGI SINGER

Sy Snootles, the singer entertaining Jabba and his retinue, was replaced by gruesome CGI. It's not even subtle, as the lead singer trills right into the camera. It's glaring, irritating and one of the more egregious examples of Lucas seeming ashamed of his puppets.

T THE SONG WAS ALSO REPLACED FOR THE 1997 SPECIAL EDITION, WITH *JEDI ROCKS* TAKING THE PLACE OF *LAPTI NEK*.

SARLACC'S BEAK

When Luke, Han and Chewie are facing certain death above the Sarlacc, that certain death now has a CG beak and tentacles. It's less irritating than the more glaring changes, but still unnecessary. It's a giant fanged mouth in the sand – it doesn't need a beak!

T HAN'S LINE TO THE DANGLING LANDO WAS CHANGED FOR THE '97 EDITION TO "IT'S ALRIGHT, I CAN SEE BETTER NOW."

Who can forget Luke's battle with the terrifying Rancor?

...or the wretched hive of scum and villainy that frequent Jabba's palace?

Han is ready to leave his old life behind for his friends.

The trio are the real core of the original *Star Wars* trilogy, and the relationship between Luke, Leia and Han is finally resolved as Luke discovers that Leia is his sister. For the most part Luke is a curiously sexless hero, with the exception of that retroactively disturbing kiss with Leia in *Empire*. Expanded Universe literature would find him a bride, but over the trilogy of films his journey to manhood is based entirely around ridding himself of his issues with his father. This relatively simplistic arc is perhaps why most fans acknowledge that Han is the more interesting hero, but it's also why it makes far more sense that Leia would have her head turned by the dashing smuggler. What's more, while the lack of a love triangle in the final film might not be interesting dramatically, it allows Han and Leia's bickering relationship to come to a satisfying conclusion. That callback to "I love you," "I know," is just wonderful.

Luke's journey comes to a close with his confrontation with Vader and the Emperor. Yoda and Obi-Wan's concerns that the Emperor might be able to talk Luke into joining the Dark Side were always ridiculously unfounded; his reserve of hate and anger is negligible, and he's driven by justice rather than revenge and darkness. His final victory might feel like a foregone conclusion, but the film is going for the heartstrings rather than the adrenal glands at this point. *Return Of The Jedi* is not flawless, then, but it's the big-hearted conclusion to a trilogy that occupies a place in the hearts of so many.

The **STAR WARS: THE COMPLETE SAGA** boxset is available on Blu-ray from LucasFilm

NOOOO!!!

Darth Vader's wordless execution of the Emperor was altered by the Blu-ray release, which added a great big "NOOOO!!!" that diminishes the moment's emotional impact and reminds everyone how much they hated the prequel trilogy.

LUCAS DIGITALLY ERASED SEBASTIAN SHAW'S EYEBROWS FOR THE BLU-RAY TO MATCH HIS INJURIES IN *REVENGE OF THE SITH*.

HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN

To add insult to injury, Lucas removed Sebastian Shaw from the final scene and replaced him with Hayden Christensen. The footage is taken from costume tests, though that glazed expression could have come from any of the prequels.

THE GREAT SIR ALEC GUINNESS SHOT ALL HIS SCENES FOR *RETURN OF THE JEDI* IN JUST ONE DAY.

LIFE AFTER JEDI – ARE THE NOVELS CANON?

While *Return Of The Jedi* marked the end of the line for the *Star Wars* saga cinematically speaking – or at least it did until the prequels and the announcement of JJ Abrams' upcoming *Episode VII* – the universe continued to expand thanks to a series of novels and comics. For example, in the novel series, Luke finds a bride and Boba Fett survives the Sarlacc Pit.

However, whether or not the novels are absolutely canon is another issue. Lucasfilm created the 'Holocron' to determine a hierarchy of canon-ness, with five stages ranging from 'absolute' to 'non'. George Lucas has said in the past that he's happy for them to continue, but doesn't feel in any way beholden to them. There's no reason to assume that anything written in the novels set after *Return Of The Jedi* will feature in Abrams' *Episode VII*.

WHY IS RETURN OF THE JEDI A MODERN CLASSIC?

LUKE BECOMES A MAN

The journey that Luke Skywalker set out on at the start of *A New Hope* finally concludes, transforming him from a child into a man. Not only is he a better fighter than he ever was before; he's also more emotionally mature and in full control of his Jedi abilities. You are a man, my son.

HAN AND LEIA

Everybody's favourite bickering couple finally get together in *Return Of The Jedi*. All traces of that pesky love triangle are washed away, and they're free to affectionately wisecrack through their assault on the Empire base on Endor.

JABBA'S PALACE

In a film that's not light on grotesque, malicious villains, Jabba is the very nadir of what the galaxy has to offer, and his palace reflects that. He's got a band playing in what is essentially a darkened cave, a robot branding room and a Rancor. He truly is a wonderful human being.

FORESTS OF ENDOR

Each of the films has one particularly memorable planet, from Tatooine to Hoth, and in *Return Of The Jedi* it's Endor. The scenes were filmed in the Redwood National Park, and they create a wonderful location for the thrilling speeder chase.

YES, THE EWOKS

We understand that some people don't like them, and we even understand why. But we firmly believe that the Ewoks are a huge part of what makes *Return Of The Jedi* a modern classic. From Wicket to the very forward little Ewok who caresses Han, they're just brilliant. Yub nub. Ee chop yub nub.

SUPERMAN II

SUPERMAN II REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL SUPERHERO FILMS OF ALL TIME. HOWEVER, BEHIND THE SCENES, ALL WASN'T WELL. WE TAKE A LOOK BACK…

Despite the well-documented conflicts between *Superman: The Movie* director Richard Donner and producers Alex and Ilya Salkind, Donner had fully expected to complete the filming of *Superman II*, which he had, for a time, been shooting simultaneously with the first film.

"My original contract was to deliver two films", Donner explains, "and everybody who signed was told that they were doing two films. We started both, and shot everything with Marlon Brando, Gene Hackman, Ned Beatty and Valerie Perrine for both pictures, and then we realised that if we were going to deliver the first one by Christmas [1978], we had to stop and put all our efforts into that. Having completed everything with those actors, we put *Superman II* on the side burner, and all our efforts into the first film. *Superman* was a success, and the Salkinds, for whatever reason, chose not to bring me back after I waited to hear for six or eight weeks. I got a telegram one day that said, 'Your services are no longer needed.' That's the Dick Lester story."

The other part of the Richard Lester story is that things had gotten so acrimonious between Donner and the Salkinds that Lester (who had helmed the *Three* and *Four Musketeers* for them) was brought in as a liaison between both parties on the first film. In the end, though, Lester replaced Donner on *Superman II*, and both he and the Salkinds were dismissive of how much material Donner had shot for the sequel. Flash forward to the 2006 release of *Superman II: The Richard Donner Cut*, and the answer is obvious: the footage was substantial.

Insofar as Donner not being 'asked' to reprise his role as director, Lester was not surprised.

"By the time *Superman II* was supposed to happen, there was already litigation between Donner and the producers, so there was no way they were going to work together", explains Lester. For one thing, he was suing the Salkinds for money owed, plus, according to Lester, "He had set a list of demands like they would have to leave the picture if he was going to carry on. They then came to me and said, 'Would you do it?' Having been involved that little bit on the first one, I was astonished at the technical possibilities that were available to which I was totally and woefully ignorant in terms of miniatures and traveling mattes, which I had never been involved with. I came on more like an open university course, viewing it as a chance to learn what I felt I should know."

Ironically, it seems as though the things that had appeared daunting to Lester on the first film – such as trying to take a realistic approach with the main character – were what attracted him to the second.

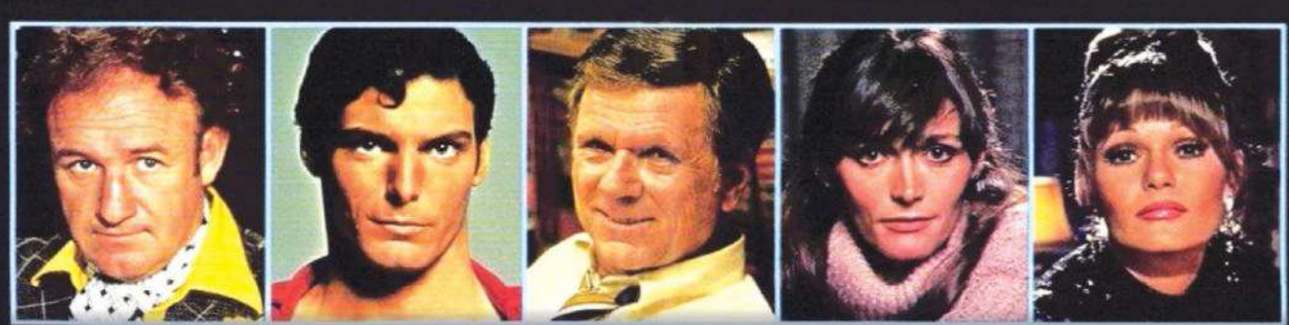
"Not exactly", he differs, "because the problems were still there in that there wasn't any reality. I think you can see by the third one, where I had some input on the storyline – or at least more input – that I was playing around with the toys of reality by getting an actor like Richard Pryor and starting the whole film off in an unemployment office. In essence, it's really examining how far you can go towards a reality. That being the case, *Superman II* was more of a technical exercise, which was very interesting. I also found that I'd enjoyed the experience on *Superman* and had a very good time on *Superman II*. There's something remarkably easy about working on a film with four units. If anybody has a problem, if you find you're up against some problem on that unit, you just say, 'I'm sorry lads, but the flying unit needs me desperately', and you can walk away from that problem and whistle along in the studio. Nobody knows where you are, and they all assume you're hard at work on one of the other units, so when you're back they've solved that problem, and you go on day after day."

Yet despite all of the technical aspects of *Superman II*, there was a very human core at the heart of the film in terms of the Lois/Clark/Superman relationship.

"I think you have to work hard at that", Lester admits. "My theory is that in a film that's very technical, it is important to always have a sequence, especially after

Despite his success on the first film, director Richard Donner was replaced by Richard Lester.

SUPERMAN II



In *Superman II*, the man of steel comes into conflict with fellow Kryptonians Zod, Ursa and Non.

a very special effects-heavy scene, where two actors could work easily together. Where they didn't have to stand on a particular spot and have a cable up their backside, so you could have a naturalistic character/actor in to do a scene before you go zooming off into another technical, and therefore slightly stiff, sequence. We tried to make sure that we wrote with the Newmans [screenwriters David and Leslie] sequences where the actors could get their teeth into something that had a little bit of reality about it."

In terms of signing up the cast, *Superman II* got off to a rough start. Although Terence Stamp, Sarah Douglas and Jack O'Halloran had been signed to reprise their Kryptonian villain roles of, respectively, Zod, Ursa and Non (who come to Earth and plan to take over the planet), there were actually some difficulties with stars Margot Kidder and Christopher Reeve. Kidder made it clear to anyone who would listen that she was not pleased with the shoddy treatment given to Richard Donner by the Salkinds, and if not for the sheer necessity of her participation, the odds are fairly strong that she would have been dismissed. Reeve, for his part, had grown upset over the fact that he had been paid a reported $250,000 for both films, while *Superman: The Movie* went on to gross nearly $200 million domestically. Things got so bad, in fact, that he actually walked off the film. The Salkinds attempted some posturing, claiming that if James Bond could be replaced so could Superman, but a settlement was worked out, and Reeve donned his tights.

Having renewed his flying license, Reeve was more than happy to discuss his feelings about both Superman and Clark Kent.

"Both identities are more sharply defined in *Superman II*", Reeve said. "In the first picture, we had to establish who Superman was, and why he disguised himself as Clark Kent. This time, we came out swinging. Like most people of my age, I was brought up on Superman. I knew the classic stance – hands on hips, cape blowing, bullets bouncing off his chest. That's the way the six and a half billion people have loved Superman, and I wouldn't dream of changing it. But I wanted to find other dimensions as well.

"In a sense," he elaborated, "Superman is a stranger in a strange land, a solitary man with incredible powers, trying to fit into his adopted planet. He has warmth and a great sense of humour. And while he has sworn to uphold 'truth, justice and the American way', there's nothing self-conscious about him. That's simply because it's what he believes in, in a world filled with arch-criminals and evil geniuses. However, Clark Kent is more fun to play. There's more scope to the role because he is such an awful mess."

In the pages of *Fantastic Films* magazine, Reeve added, "When you approach the Superman character, you must remember that when a man, superhuman or not, is capable of heroic deeds, he becomes a bore, a very pompous bore, if he doesn't have a sense of humor about himself. Because of all the amazing things Superman can do, he must temper his achievements with a certain kind of human modesty in order to make himself acceptable to others. He must be secure enough about himself to make jokes and to be vulnerable in that sense. If he didn't, he would be impossible to relate to, and no one would like him."

Reeve and Kidder were both involved in disputes pre-filming.

Prior to the commencement of production, director Richard Lester and screenwriters David and Leslie Newman mapped out the tone of *Superman II*, determined to establish their own take on the character, which would prove to differ somewhat from the one offered by Richard Donner.

"I think that Donner was emphasising a kind of grandiose myth", offers Lester. "There was a kind of David Lean-ish attempt in certain sequences, and enormous scale. There was an epic quality which isn't in my nature, so my work really didn't embrace that. We didn't want to destroy the myth until we deliberately did in *III*. I don't think I could have done that sort of work in the early Kansas/Smallville scenes. That's not me; that was his vision of it. I'm more quirky and I play around with slightly more unexpected silliness. I've never really worked with storyboards before these films. I've never really prepared sequences in that way. I've been inclined to look at the day and see what's there and wing it."

Adds David Newman, "Our favourite is *Superman II*. The problem with the first film is that there was so much back story to get out of the way. I think *Superman* is three different movies. There's the Krypton part, which you had to tell because that's the legend, although there's something about it which seems kind of pretentious to me."

"Then there's the Smallville stuff", David adds, "and that's a kind of John Ford-looking film, with all those landscapes, Glenn Ford, farmers and all that stuff, which is another movie. And once you get to Metropolis, that's another movie. To me, there was an unavoidable clash of styles in *Superman*, although the film works wonderfully. *Superman II*, to us, was just a dream to do because you didn't have to go into all

that stuff. We were actually able to recap the original under the credits. And I love those three villains. To me, *Superman II* was a fairy tale. First of all, it was a fairy tale about love, second of all it had the greatest threat out of the films, because it was three against one with a slam-bang finish."

"And the thing we love most," says Leslie, "is the intercutting; the pacing of the stories."

"On the other hand," counters Leslie Newman, "you really don't have the time to get to know the individual characters on Krypton as characters, so you can't make Krypton have any reality."

An intriguing angle of the story for the Newmans was the Lois/Superman/Clark triangle.

"There's that great aspect of the mythos, which is Lois Lane," smiles David. "She loves Superman, but doesn't like Clark. Clark loves her, and is jealous of Superman, so he doesn't like Superman."

"BOTH CLARK AND SUPERMAN ARE MORE SHARPLY DEFINED IN SUPERMAN II"

– CHRISTOPHER REEVE

Laughs Leslie, "And in the love scene, which is our favourite, she says, 'But if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't have met you', and it's all so confusing because she's just found out the truth. I was fascinated by Lois and her relationship to both Clark and Superman, and the very nature of Lois. She reflects changing attitudes towards women. I couldn't bear the Lois of the Fifties, but then it was pretty unbearable being a woman in the Fifties. When you write a film, it helps to have somebody to write for. It doesn't matter if they're alive or dead. It's just a notion in your mind, although it's not likely to be that person in all probability, but it's who gives you the germ. So in this case, she didn't want to give it all up and settle down. She was spunky."

"Whereas the Lois Lane of the Fifties thought, 'If he'd only marry me, I could settle down," says David. "And she always got herself into dumb scrapes, not because of ambition, but because of stupidity."

One of the most talked about aspects of *Superman II* was the aerial battle between Superman and the three villains from Krypton. Perhaps surprisingly, Lester doesn't feel that achieving that sequence was as daunting as one would initially think.

"It was only insane in the fact that you sit down in a room with people, many of whom have quite reasonable brains, and have gone to universities and taken degrees, and are good with their children and wash their cars, tend their garden, who say, 'OK, he's going to pick up the bus and throw it at Superman. How do we do that?' And these grown men sit around for a while, and find the answers. Once you accept a certain set of ground rules, you realise this is the scale that looks real and we can do, and these are things we can't do; and you get the balance right. I've always felt about all films of this type that unless you explain to the audience precisely what the powers are, they are happy with them. But I think audiences feel that if suddenly you switch the rules in the middle of the film, you don't know where you are."

Despite the troubled pre-production, *Superman II* was just as well received as the original.

It's pointed out that *Superman II* actually did include a sequence where the villains levitated someone with a beam from their fingers – which doesn't actually existed in the comics prior to that moment they were depicted in the film.

"I don't see that that's any worse than super breath in terms of scale", Lester offers. "Certainly all of the scripts and changes were always sent to DC Comics to make sure they're in the canon. And, in fact, there was a representative from DC Comics who saw the dailies every day. Certainly nobody said, 'Well, that's something that wouldn't happen.' Mind you, I think if you did something absolutely insane but looked terrific, they'd say, 'ok, we'll go and write that into the next comic and have it out before the film comes out.'"

Upon its release, *Superman II* (which premiered in 1980, and made it to the States the following year) was greeted with praise, with a great many critics claiming that it was actually better than its predecessor, achieving the perfect mix of romance and comic-book action. Furthermore, the first two Superman films have successfully managed to endure the passage of time.

"I have my own feeling about that," says Lester. "I think the myth and tricks within the original idea, conscious or unconscious, were treated with respect, sometimes more than others… we were all careful to respect that basic idea, and that will always work.

"Today, a Superman film would be easier to make," Lester smiles, "but it was bloody hard work at the time."

The **SUPERMAN ANTHOLOGY** is available on Blu-ray from Warner Brothers

SciFiNow speaks to Wes Craven, Robert Englund and others about the fear franchise that was a dream come true for thrill-seeking Eighties cinemagoers...

"If you have seen one film by Wes Craven it is safe enough, I think, to skip the others. The genre labours enough critical disapproval and outright dislike; one need not make a bad situation worse by underwriting films of porno-violence" – Stephen King, *Danse Macabre*.

We can perhaps forgive the world's most famous horror author for such a comment. After all, in 1981 – when Stephen King released his critical study *Danse Macabre* – Wes Craven had made his name as the director of two grim and gritty grindhouse offerings: 1972's *The Last House On The Left* and 1977's *The Hills Have Eyes*. Although both films are now seen as early examples of a fast-developing terror talent, at the time their main claim to fame was in causing a stink, pushing the boundaries of on-screen violence and baiting international censors (*Last House* was banned in the UK, while *Hills* was drastically cut by the BBFC). Nevertheless, by the start of the Eighties, Craven (who had evolved out of the New York adult film world with his partner in crime, Sean Cunningham) was starting to make some leeway into the mainstream. 1981 saw him hook up with future mega-star Sharon Stone for *Deadly Blessing*, a much more subdued backwoods horror effort, and 1982 brought the comic book adaptation *Swamp Thing*, which reunited him with *Last House* star David Hess. Yet Craven had one script in particular that he was eager to see realised: *A Nightmare On Elm Street*. Sadly, every studio in town had turned it down – with the exception of an independent producer named Robert Shaye, the head of a down and dirty exploitation outfit called New Line Cinema (later to be known as 'the house that Freddy built').

In his introduction to the book *The Nightmare Never Ends*, Shaye – whose New Line branch would conquer Hollywood with the likes of *Se7en*, *Lord Of The Rings* and *The Golden Compass* – recounts that "Wes was problematic. I had seen *The Last House On The Left* and was frankly appalled. It was beyond horrific. It was brutal. But I rather liked *The Hills Have Eyes*. It was apparent to me that Wes had access, somewhere, to a very twisted fantasy world." As a result, Shaye – fresh from producing such cult titles as John Water's 1981 farce *Polyester* and 1982's inventive chiller *Alone In The Dark* – opted to pick up *A Nightmare On Elm Street*. It would take him no less than three years to raise the money and kick Craven's golden egg into production. "*Last House* and *The Hills Have Eyes* are definitely very different from my later work – and there's a continuation there between the two," states Craven to **SciFiNow**. "But a character like Freddy Krueger is much more universal. Everyone can relate to bad dreams. Plus, I had no intention of revisiting the brutality of these earlier movies." Although the original *Nightmare On Elm Street* would introduce the world to a young actor named Johnny Depp (who is eaten by his own bed in a memorably outlandish set piece), it would be Robert Englund as the villainous Freddy Krueger, 'bastard son of 100 maniacs', that captivated the horror crowd. A wise-cracking, hideously scarred ghoul, Krueger was a "nasty, filthy child killer" who was cornered and burned to death by a group of vigilante parents. Now, he seeks revenge on those who slaughtered him by killing their offspring while they sleep…

"The thing about Freddy is this – he is just so unabashedly evil," laughs Englund when **SciFiNow** catches up with him. "He is not politically correct, he does not apologise and he's not ➢

The Complete Guide To...
A NIGHTM ON ELM ST

ARE REET

The *Nightmare On Elm Street* series has always revelled in the more sinister scenarios.

The series is full of stock horror characters, and although the clichés can grate, they're often a guilty pleasure.

The Elm Street movies, film by film

A look at Wes Craven's entire series

A Nightmare On Elm Street

Nancy Thompson and her school friends are being stalked in their sleep by the vengeful dream-demon Freddy Krueger in Craven's finest fear film.

A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge

Jesse Walsh finds that Freddy possesses him in order to re-enter the 'real' world.

A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors

Nancy Thompson is now a sleep therapist at a sanatorium where Freddy is doing his latest slicing.

A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 4: The Dream Master

Freddy is back but a new adversary, Alice, learns to control her dreams and defeat Krueger.

A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 5: The Dream Child

Unable to defeat Alice, Freddy tries to take over the body and soul of her unborn baby.

Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare

In part six of the series, all of the Elm Street children are finally dead but dream monster Freddy Krueger has one last score to settle: he has a daughter.

Wes Craven's New Nightmare

Freddy Krueger breaks out from the fictional realm and into the real world, hunting down the people who made movies about him...

Freddy Vs Jason

Unable to get to a new generation of Elm Street kids, Freddy uses Camp Crystal Lake killer Jason Voorhees to do his bloody bidding for him. Until Freddy realises he must take down Jason himself.

trying to get any sympathy. He is always in a revenge motif. There is no place for him in the future so he kills the future generations. Freddy is also pretty insightful. He certainly knows people's weaknesses and how to exploit them and I think audiences respond to that. I also think he is the logo of eight films now and, out of these, I think that most of them are pretty damn good." Although Englund had dabbled in the genre before (most memorably in the TV series *V* but also in the likes of Tobe Hooper's 1976 monster mash *Eaten Alive* and 1981's 'video nasty' *Dead & Buried*) it was his turn as Freddy that allowed him to achieve stardom. "There is something just so iconic about the character as well," maintains the actor. "The hat, the glove, the striped jumper… It is such a striking image." Moreover, whereas previous modern monsters – such as Jason Voorhees and Michael Myers – could be played by any old Joe, Freddy was a proper character role, making Englund the true heir to the throne previously occupied by the likes of Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. "I have a theory that the most powerful horror films have to do with families," continues Craven. "You know, *Last House* is that way, *Hills* is that way and *A Nightmare On Elm Street* is that way. But the thing about the *Elm Street* movies is that the star is always Robert Englund. You cannot do one of these films without him."

Nevertheless, that did not stop them from trying. After *A Nightmare On Elm Street* did great business at the box office (taking in $26 million in the US which, in 1984, was no short change), New Line rushed a sequel into production right away. Craven could not be enticed to return to the series after his initial idea for a follow-up was vetoed by Shaye and a new director was quickly found. The man for the job was Jack Sholder, who had previously helmed the aforementioned maniacs-on-the-loose caper *Alone In The Dark*. However, according to the filmmaker, Englund was in danger of not being brought back to the Freddy fold. "*A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2* was very hurried," states the director to **SciFiNow**. "And the one thing I had to fight for was to bring back Robert. To the people making the movie, Freddy could have been played by anyone. I had to say to them, 'This is not just another masked guy like Jason or Leatherface. Freddy has to be Robert Englund.' I eventually won but the movie itself was not as good as it could have been. I accept that I made a big mistake by bringing Freddy into the real world." Indeed, whereas the first movie made it clear that Craven's slasher exists only the world of nightmares, the first sequel – dubbed *Freddy's Revenge* – spins an odd tale of possession, repressed homosexuality and a razor-fingered villain that can freely walk around in public. "Yeah, it didn't quite work," states Sholder. "But there are some things I do think I can take credit for. For example, *Freddy's Revenge* was the one that gave Englund more lines and let him develop the character's sense of humour." ➤

Creator Wes Craven has given horror a character that will be referenced for years to come.

The men who made Freddy

The special effects maestro behind the horror icon

Several of Hollywood's major effects names have plied their trade on the Freddy films – but it was David Miller who gave the gloved ghoul his iconic look in the first movie. He would return to oversee the character's prosthetics in 1989's *The Dream Child* – also creating the memorable 'Freddy baby'. However, the man who really made Krueger his own, and became synonymous with the effects of *Elm Street*, was Kevin Yagher. From 1985's first follow-up *Freddy's Revenge* through to 1988's *The Dream Master*, Yagher brought viewers a more detailed, and arguably even more gruesome, visage for the screen's favourite slasher. Such work did not go unnoticed and the artist went on to be employed on such hits as *Sleepy Hollow*, *Aeon Flux* and the *Mission: Impossible* films.

Taking over from Miller and Yagher for *Freddy's Dead* was someone who was also a director in his own right: John Carl Buechler. As a filmmaker, Buechler had called the shots on 1988's twosome of *Cellar Dweller* and *Friday The 13th Part VII: The New Blood*, while his effects work had included the likes of *Re-Animator* and *From Beyond*. Most recently he worked his latex magic on Englund, and Kane 'Jason' Hodder, on 2006's sleeper hit *Hatchet*.

A new Freddy was needed for 1994's *New Nightmare* and the guys to do it were Robert Kurtzman, Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger of the famed KNB Effects group. Today, KNB is Hollywood's top effects house – going from low budget horror to the likes of the *Narnia* films, *Transformers* and television's *CSI*.

Macabre memorabilia

The Freddy fad resulted in a number of tie-in goodies that collectors continue to hunt out to this day...

Freddy Krueger glove

For only £42.95 you can buy a "deluxe replica" on Amazon, although a much cheaper (albeit still officially licensed) copy of the famed Krueger hand-knives can be had for only £6.99. Hey, it's not as if you're actually going to kill anyone with these are you?

McFarlane Movie Maniacs action figures

The hugely popular run of 'Movie Maniacs' kicked off in 1998 with Michael, Jason, Leatherface and Freddy – all posed in front of a replica film poster. Since then, Freddy has undergone various action figure incarnations. Price varies, but between £10-15 is about right for the early McFarlane figures.

Killer Trivia

This set of *Nightmare On Elm Street* and *Friday The 13th* trivia (£16.95) is a virtual *Mastermind* for the slasher movie addict. Yes, this bountiful box of obscure Freddy questions certainly shows that *Elm Street* buffs can be just as obsessive as your average Trekkie.

Full Freddy fancy dress costume

Fancy a change this Halloween? Why not drop your Jack Sparrow costume and go as the slightly less respectable 'Bastard Son of 100 Maniacs?' This jumper and mask combo can be yours for £17.99.

Freddy Spitballs

This is our favourite piece of obscure Freddy memorabilia. Released in 1988, you get a small rubber ball of Freddy, and victim, which – when filled with water and then squeezed – spray a jet of liquid from a small hole in the mouth area. £5.00 (eBay).

Talking Freddy doll

Released in 1989 (and with various re-releases since then), Freddy can be had as an 18-inch figure who will gabble a few choice words ("Are you ready for Freddy?" etc) to anyone willing to pull the string on his back. A keeper at £19.99.

Freddy Krueger goblet

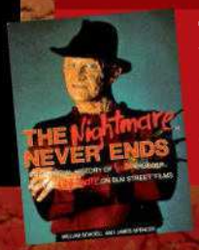
We are not even sure we like this. It's, um, pretty hideous really. But it is also amusing to think about serving guests wine from these macabre puppies, which are decorated by Freddy's grinning visage. Horrify your dinner guests for just £4.99.

Freddy Krueger records!

When Alice Cooper hooked up with Jason for the frankly embarrassing *The Man Behind The Mask*, Freddy quickly joined Fat Boys for 1988's *Are You Ready For Freddy?* It was hilariously awful, but a CD single can still be had for around £5.00.

A Nightmare On Elm Street comics

Freddy Vs Jason Vs Ash saw the light of day in comic book form in November 2007, but we'd recommend that Krueger completists search out the short-lived, two issue Marvel line of *Elm Street* comics, printed in atmospheric black and white, in 1989.



The Nightmare Never Ends

Tracing the series from 1984 through to *Freddy's Dead*, this behind-the-scenes look at the *Elm Street* franchise is packed full of great pictures and illuminating information. Alas, it is now very rare (Amazon is asking £145)... Watch those second-hand stores!

Ten of the best

The top ten of Freddy's terrors

1 Talk about earache!

(Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare)

Hearing impaired Carlos (Ricky Dean Logan) is given a new earpiece by Freddy... Of the ultra-sensitive kind! Even a pin drop can cause excruciating pain and when Mr Krueger drops several of them from a high height the poor bugger's head explodes!

2 Don't do drugs

(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors)

"Wanna get high?" asks Freddy Krueger to recovering heroin addict Taryn White (Jennifer Rubin). His razors are promptly replaced with syringes and, in a particularly lethal moment, ten watts of junk are injected into the luckless girl, whose arms suddenly develop puckering, moving holes...

3 Old habits die hard

(Wes Craven's New Nightmare)

Hollywood special effects wizard Chase Porter (David Newsom) is working hard on a new *Nightmare On Elm Street* movie. But Freddy Krueger's famous glove begins to move on its own accord and, before long, it violently leaps up into the air and attacks him... It's only a dream, though. Or is it?

4 Freddy's first filleting

(A Nightmare On Elm Street)

The series' initial demise is also the nastiest out of all eight movies. Tina (Amanda Wyss) is dragged from her sleep and torn to shreds while her boyfriend Rod looks on helpless. Who said Wes had calmed down since *Last House On The Left*?

5 Bon appetite!

(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 5: The Dream Child)

Obsessive about keeping the perfect body, Greta (Erika Anderson) falls asleep at the dinner table and meets her new garcon, Freddy. Forced to eat until she explodes (and then served her guts) this is Grand Guignol at its finest.

6 Alien has nothing on this

(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge)

"He's in me!" screams Jesse (Mark Patton) to his best friend Grady. Yes, he is – and in a spectacular moment of special effects, Freddy literally bursts out of the possessed lad's torso – *slowly*. This is before CGI remember...

7 Cockroach-carnage

(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 4: The Dream Master)

Fitness freak Debbie (Brooke Theiss) falls asleep at her weights and has her arms broken off by Freddy, sprouting cockroach limbs in their place. She is transformed into an insect before being summarily squashed.

8 Puppet-pain

(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors)

Philip (Bradley Gregg) has his arms and feet slashed asunder, with Freddy taking his loins and playing him like a walking puppet. In agony, the viewer actually feels relief when the poor teenager is forced to tread to his death.

9 Hockey mask vs razors

(Freddy Vs Jason)

It was the one that Eighties horror geeks waited for and the end result saw mixed results. Who won? Who cares when there's this much silliness on screen? Freddy gets the best lines and more than holds his own against *Friday The 13th*'s chief baddie.

10 Death-by-bed

(A Nightmare On Elm Street)

Despite being warned not to fall asleep, Glen (Johnny Depp) does just that. The result is that his entire bed opens up and consumes him. A few tantalising seconds later and a river of blood bellows upwards, covering his entire ceiling in plasma.

Although *Freddy's Revenge* would be critically pummelled upon its November 1985 release, it was – once again – an enormous commercial success. Nevertheless, perhaps taking notice of the negative press, Shaye brought Craven back to his New Line office and asked him to develop a script for a third movie. The result (which was co-written by Craven's friend Bruce Wagner) became the basis for 1987's *Dream Warriors*, the best of the *Elm Street* follow-ups. Wisely, *Part 3* opted to ignore its immediate predecessor and instead picked up six years after the events of the first movie. This also allowed two of the stars of the original picture, Heather Langenkamp and John Saxon, to return to the *Elm Street* universe. Sadly, Craven would not direct the feature – with the job instead going to Chuck Russell, who would later find fame and fortune as the helmer of such blockbusters as *The Mask*, *Eraser* and *The Scorpion King*. "It was my first directing gig and I really was a fan of the first one," mentions Russell. "I pushed myself with that movie. I didn't think that I could make it scarier than the first film but I thought I could find a way to make it thrilling and funny and to take what was surreal and funny about Freddy and push that aspect a little bit further. I think the *Elm Street* series works because of the camaraderie of the teenagers. There's something magical there that we can all relate to – that time in life where no adults believe what you say." Nevertheless, Shaye expected the filmmaker to add his own touch to the screenplay, which he did – bringing in Frank Darabont, who would later work on Russell's remake of *The Blob* – and starting afresh. "I had ten days to

Elm Street has always been a series for actors aching to ham it up.

The series has given more than its fair share of memorable imagery.

There are few horror creations as iconic as Freddy Krueger.

do a complete page one rewrite on *Dream Warriors*," recalls the director. "But that's the way it happens – when it happens, it happens fast."

A rare example of a sequel that seamlessly complements its inspiration, *Dream Warriors* gave Patricia Arquette her breakout role as a troubled teen stalked by Freddy and helped by Langenkamp's sympathetic sleep therapist (*Matrix* star Laurence Fishburne also features in the plot). However, although it seems to conclude the Freddy mythology with a well realised finale, it took only 16 months for yet another *Elm Street* picture to slip out. Still, it was with 1988's *Dream Warriors* that Englund would finally be awarded pre-credits 'star' billing and see himself become a household name (he even negotiated a directorial job, *976-Evil*, out of his Freddy contract). Furthermore, with a notably bigger budget – and Renny Harlin calling the shots – the fourth *Elm Street* offering was loud, garish and pure popcorn. "I like double bills," reflects Englund. "I like my bang for my bucks and I think that parts three and four go together perfectly." Although part four, dubbed *The Dream Master*, took in more money than any *Elm Street* offering before it, there were signs that the character was beginning to suffer from overexposure. Indeed, if *Dream Warriors* introduced a Freddy music video for MTV – and American parents could now buy *Elm Street* pyjamas for their kids (!) – then by 1988 there was also a *Freddy's Nightmares* television series. "I did that show mostly for the chance to direct and to get my Director's Guild card," admits Englund of the small-screen spin-off that ran for 44 episodes. "We worked 24-7 on that. Looking back it was a pretty rough show to work on."

Consequently, by the time of 1989's *The Dream Child*, the fifth *Elm Street* movie since 1984, it was obvious that fatigue was setting in on the Freddy persona. Whereas Harlin's sequel took in $49 million domestically, *The Dream Child* – directed by *Predator 2*'s Stephen Hopkins ➤➤

Where are they now? Whatever came of the Elm Street children?

Heather Langenkamp
(Nancy Thompson, A Nightmare On Elm Street 1 and 3, New Nightmare)
She didn't reach the heights of co-star Johnny Depp, but Langenkamp appeared in such TV shows as *Just The Ten Of Us* and *Growing Pains*. She co-directed horror film *Prank*.

Mark Patton
(Jesse Walsh, A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge)
1985's ill-fated sequel marked Patton's sole leading man role (he had also auditioned for the part played by Johnny Depp in the original film). He now directs local theatre from his base of Venice, California.

Patricia Arquette
(Kristen Parker, A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors)
One of the most famous *Elm Street* graduates, Arquette went on to become a bankable actress following her turns in such high profile fare as *True Romance* and *Stigmata*.

Jennifer Rubin
(Taryn White, A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors)
One of the most memorable *Elm Street* teens, the stunning Jennifer Rubin went on to top-line 1995's sci-fi shocker *Screamers* and 1999's *Road Kill*. Today, she has retired from the acting business.

Lisa Wilcox
(Alice Johnson, A Nightmare On Elm Street 4 and 5)
Lisa Wilcox headlined two of the *Elm Street* sequels and nowadays runs her own jewellery business with *Nightmare On Elm Street 4* co-star Tuesday Knight. One of Wilcox's latest film credits is a high school terror offering called *Clinger*.

Lezlie Dean
(Tracy, Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare)
The beautiful Dean had the honour of killing Freddy. Although she continued acting in bit parts on TV, Dean's biggest success would come as a member of controversial rock band Fem2Fem (the entire group even undressed for *Playboy* magazine!).

Robert Englund
(No introduction needed, surely)
Robert Englund, the man behind one of horror's most iconic creations, continues to carve out a niche in the genre, with his more recent efforts including *2001 Maniacs*, *Zombie Strippers*, *Black Swarm* and the heavily-hyped *Jack Brooks: Monster Slayer*.

The wit and wisdom of Freddy Krueger

"I'm your boyfriend now Nancy"
(Freddy to Nancy, shortly after disposing of her beau Glen in *A Nightmare On Elm Street*)

"Welcome to prime time, bitch"
(Freddy, to wannabe actress Jennifer, before smashing the poor girl, head first, into a TV set in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3*)

"What's wrong Joey? Feeling tongue tied?"
(Freddy, to sanatorium teen Joey, after tying him to a bed with living, moving tongues in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3*)

"Wanna suck face?"
(Freddy to Sheila before, literally, sucking the air from her body in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 4: The Dream Master*)

"How's this for a wet dream?"
(Freddy, after drowning Joey in his bed in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 4: The Dream Master*)

"It's a boy!"
(Freddy to Alice after resurrecting in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 5: The Dream Child*)

"What's with kids today huh? No respect"
(Freddy in *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*)

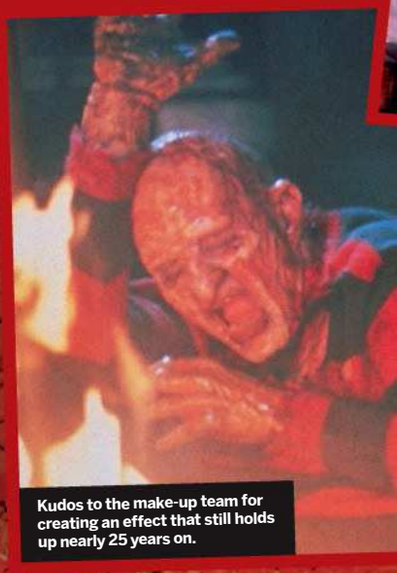
"Now I'm playing with power!"
(Freddy while killing somebody after projecting them into a videogame in *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*)

"You're slow, you're stupid... and you've got no style" (To Jason in *Freddy Vs Jason*)

– netted only $22 million (interestingly, the same year also saw time called, at least temporarily, on two other horror franchises: *Friday The 13th* and *Halloween* – new sequels to both also underperformed theatrically). 1989's *Elm Street* instalment featured the return of Lisa Wilcox, a pretty blonde who was introduced as 'the dream master' in part four. In an odd plot twist, she finds herself pregnant and discovers that Freddy is trying to be reborn through her new baby. The result seems to be a weirdly conservative, anti-abortion parable, although Englund thinks otherwise. "I know Stephen Hopkins and I don't think that was what he was trying to say," mentions the actor. "Look, there are Jungian and Freudian things that are in all of these movies, which stem from Wes. He called Freddy 'the bastard son of 100 maniacs', remember? But we layer that stuff and it is not really thematic. I think that the viewers might sense it in their heart but they can't quite put their finger on it – however, it is all there: the Freudian thing of sex with your mother, abuse, abortion, relationships, rape – all these things are floating around but it is not the theme *per se*. I think the theme per se is that you better mature and face difficult situations. I would say that is what *Part 5* is about."

Although Wilcox was the sole *Elm Street* heroine to leave the franchise alive, she was not brought back for 1991's disastrous *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*. "They went a totally different direction but if you look at the story of the first two *Nightmare* films they have nothing to do with one another either," claims the actress, speaking today. "They just wanted to go in a different way with *Freddy's Dead*, but I have fantastic memories from these movies. Robert is a great, humorous, very intelligent actor – lots of fun and God bless his soul for sitting in that makeup chair for hours and hours every day. I had to wear Freddy makeup for 12 hours on *The Dream Child* and I couldn't even look at myself in the mirror!"

Although 1991's *Freddy's Dead* saw Craven's iconic creation reduced to a comedy afterthought (even killing someone via a Nintendo videogame in one of the worst cases of product placement ever), it at least seemed to do what it said on the box: at the end Englund was splattered across



Kudos to the make-up team for creating an effect that still holds up nearly 25 years on.

New Nightmare controversially altered the appearance of Freddy somewhat.

Walt Gorney who plays 'Crazy Ralph' returns in *VII* to narrate the opening scenes.

The men who made Freddy

The special effects maestro behind the horror icon

Several of Hollywood's major effects names have plied their trade on the Freddy films – but it was David Miller who gave the gloved ghoul his iconic look in the first movie. He would return to oversee the character's prosthetics in 1989's The Dream Child – also creating the memorable 'Freddy baby'. However, the man who really made Krueger his own and became synonymous with the effects of Elm Street, was Kevin Yagher. From 1985's first follow-up Freddy's Revenge, through to 1988's The Dream Master, Yagher brought viewers a more detailed, and arguably even more gruesome, visage for the screen's favourite slasher. Such work did not go unnoticed and the artist went on to be employed on such mega-hits as Sleepy Hollow, Aeon Flux and the Mission: Impossible films. Taking over from Miller and Yagher for Freddy's Dead was someone who was also a director in his own right: John Carl Buechler. As a filmmaker, Buechler had called the shots on 1988's twosome of Cellar Dweller and Friday The 13th Part VII: The New Blood, while his effects work had included the likes of Re-Animator and

the screen in colourful 3D. However, Craven himself had other ideas and the result was 1994's inventive *Wes Craven's New Nightmare*. "I spent years trying to get somebody to back *New Nightmare* and it was very difficult – everyone in Hollywood thought it was a dumb idea," states the director. "But Bob Shaye really liked it from back in the very beginning – he just wasn't able to find the money to fund it so it took a few years to get it done." The resulting movie brought Freddy into the real world – and saw Heather Langenkamp and John Saxon return (both playing themselves), while Englund did double duties as his proper self and a new, more edgy Freddy. Even Craven and Shaye figured in the plot. "It was actually kind of weird being in front of the camera on *New Nightmare*," laughs Craven. "I remember that after a couple of takes I would be 'okay, that's fine, now let's move on' – but I had fun playing myself and I am very fond of the movie."

Englund agrees. "I think that *New Nightmare* complements the original film well," he says. "My favourite co-star in those films has to be Heather Langenkamp and I was thrilled when she came back for the seventh movie. But I thought that was going to be the end. I mean, there is a logical bookend in that film." This being Hollywood, of course, nothing could have been further from the truth and when 1993's *Friday The 13th* sequel, *Jason Goes To Hell*, ended with Freddy's glove dragging Mr Voorhees's hockey mask into the deep abyss, it was inevitable that something was going on at the New Line brain trust…

"I thought it was fun," says Craven of 2003's *Freddy Vs Jason*. "It's one of those ideas that had been around forever. I'd consistently been asked by fans, 'I've heard they are making that, is it true?' I'd always say, 'I think so' and then they did. But all I did was create the original character. However, it did big business and it's a compliment to Freddy and a compliment to Jason too." Englund was also thrilled to return to his most famous role for one last outing. "It is hard to bury that guy," he laughs. "How to merge the two characters, without making it ridiculous, was always the problem, though. We went through a lot of directors. At first we had Rob Bottin and then we had Guillermo del Toro, who moved on to do *Blade 2*, and then we finally had Ronny Yu, who turned out to be a match made in heaven."

Sadly, despite rumours of a *Freddy Vs Jason Vs Ash* spin-off, it seems that the 2010, Michael Bay-produced *Nightmare On Elm Street* remake has effectively slaughtered Englund's days as Freddy Krueger. "I was always sure that they would do a remake," admits the actor. "I think the problem with the Ash storyline was that the Sam Raimi/Bruce Campbell camp wanted to end the franchise. Maybe have Ash defeat Freddy, which I thought was a great idea, but New Line weren't so sure." There was also the idea of a prequel, which even Craven admits he was interested in. "They would have had to get Robert to the table and have him agree to do it, and approve the script and if that happened then, yes, I'd have been interested in going back to these films," reveals the director. "I think a prequel would be quite interesting to direct."

Regardless of what could have been, looking back, Englund says that he can easily pinpoint the reason for the enduring legacy of Freddy Krueger. "I think that we were simultaneous with the video and DVD revolution, which gave us access to more fans watching horror in a different way," says the actor. "Suddenly fans were studying these movies and bringing them home. I am on four generations of fans now. The last one came out in 2003 and the first one was in 1984. I think it is as simple as a nightmare itself. It is so universal. It is like the dentist in *Marathon Man*. At some point in one of those movies there is a moment that correlates with the viewer. Just like a bad dream."

Freddy on DVD

The best Elm Street releases out there

Currently the two-disc edition of the original is the pick of the *Elm Street* DVDs – largely due to a razor-sharp transfer and two excellent documentaries on the film. However, the present boxset of the first seven movies can't be sniffed at either. That said, true Freddy buffs owe it to themselves to pick up the eight-disc *Nightmare On Elm Street* Legacy collection from the States. This baby has a whole DVD dedicated to exclusive documentaries and behind-the-scenes goodies. *Freddy Vs Jason*, meanwhile, can be found in a fabulous two-disc release, absolutely crammed with extra features. Sadly, no matter where you look, 1989's *The Dream Child* is only available in a censored R-rated version.

ET WAS THE UNFORGETTABLE TALE OF AN AFFABLE ALIEN WHOSE FLEETING VISIT TO EARTH LEFT A HUGE CROP CIRCLE SIZED IMPRESSION ON A BOY CALLED ELLIOTT AND THE REST OF THE WORLD ALONG WITH HIM. OVER THIRTY YEARS ON, WE RE-VISIT THE PREMIER MARTIAN MOVIE THAT MADE US ALL WISH FOR A CLOSE ENCOUNTER

E.T. THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL

Film

RUNNING TIME: 115 mins
RELEASE DATE: 9 December 1982
DIRECTOR: Steven Spielberg
WRITER: Melissa Mathison
CAST: Henry Thomas, Drew Barrymore, Peter Coyote

About

Ten-year-old Elliott discovers a lost alien in his garden, who he nicknames 'ET'. The pair become good friends, and it isn't long before brother Michael and sister Gertie are let in on the secret of the alien's existence. Cute shenanigans ensue before the military ruin everyone's fun while on the hunt for the otherworldly visitor, who really wants nothing more than to 'phone home'. That's the least of ET and Elliott's worries, however, when they both start to suffer with a serious illness. They must get ET back to his home planet, but will Elliott let his new best friend leave?

"I feel like I made my most personal film in 1982 with *ET*, and today I think it remains my most personal film," says director Steven Spielberg on the *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial* Special Edition DVD. The 1982 friendly alien flick is within grasp of its 30th anniversary, made with a primitive puppet and little in the way of special effects, yet it has aged remarkably well, and still remains one of the best loved movies to be beamed out of Hollywood. "The kids in the movie are combinations of myself and my family growing up," Spielberg admits. "I think that *ET* was really about the divorce of my parents. At the time, I never once said this, but I came out and confessed about ten years ago."

ET was the tale of an extra-terrestrial on a peaceful mission to collect foliage for his home planet, who is inadvertently left behind when government officials crash the plant parade. Ten-year-old Elliott is the middle child in a family that is missing a father. This hole is filled by the discovery of the alien in his garden shed, who he dubs 'ET', and quickly enters into a friendship with. Up until the film's release, cinema was being invaded by evil visitors from outer space, including Spielberg's own *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* in 1977. *ET* changed everything. "I had been living with this story for so many years, before *Close Encounters*," says Spielberg. "It wasn't always going to be called *ET*, but it was always going to be about a boy who finds an alien. I pretty much had it worked out when I asked Melissa Mathison to write it when we were making *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*… Melissa first turned me down and said 'I'm not a writer', so we all worked on her, [producer] Kathleen Kennedy worked on her, until finally she relented and said 'OK I'll write it!'." It's difficult to comprehend now that the title could be anything else, but in the very beginning it was dubbed 'A Boy's Life'.

Elliott is joined by younger sister Gertie (Drew Barrymore) and older brother Michael (Robert MacNaughton). Their mother Mary (played by Dee Wallace) was the only adult seen from the waist up for the first half of the movie. This decision was inspired by Tex Avery's cartoons, which made it clear that this was a movie about the children and their relationship with this otherworldly being. To enhance the realism of this relationship, Spielberg ensured that all wires emitting from the puppet, and the team operating the creature, were hidden from the actors' view. The movie was also shot in chronological order so the child actors' friendship and feelings for their 'colleague' grew exponentially until they reached the climactic scenes where ET is dying, and real tears were spilling freely from the youngsters' eyes. "I remember knowing deep down that ET wasn't real, but he had become my friend," admitted Barrymore, who was only six when she played Gertie, on the Special Edition DVD. "I thought the doctors were hurting him." The doctors in this scene

"ET REMAINS ONE OF THE BEST-LOVED MOVIES TO BE BEAMED OUT OF HOLLYWOOD"

FIVE CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

The best moments from ET: The Extra-Terrestrial

HAVE YOU MET MY FRIEND ET?

Elliott prepares Michael to meet ET by making him declare that he has 'absolute power', and then closing his eyes. Things don't go to plan, however, when an unsuspecting Gertie walks into the room and screams, which triggers a screaming reflex in everyone, including ET.

IT REALLY WAS THE FIRST TIME ACTOR ROBERT MACNAUGHTON SAW ET, SO THE STUNNED REACTION WAS AUTHENTIC.

PSYCHIC POWERS

As ET and Elliott grow closer, they begin to share a psychic connection. This becomes apparent when he's in class, and ET is at home exploring the pitfalls of beer and daytime television. Elliott belches, starts slurring his words, and ends up in a classroom clinch thanks to a romance scene ET is watching.

HARRISON FORD APPEARS IN A DELETED SCENE, REPRIMANDING ELLIOTT FOR HIS UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR.

FANCY A RIDE?

ET takes his new best friend for a bicycle ride through the night sky, accompanied by lots of youthful yelling. This scene created that indelible image of the duo silhouetted against the full moon, and the whimsical score playing in the background adds to the fairytale-like feeling of this childhood classic.

THIS IMAGE OF ET RIDING IN THE BASKET OF ELLIOTT'S BICYCLE BECAME THE TRADEMARK LOGO FOR AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT.

HAPPY HALLOWEEEN!

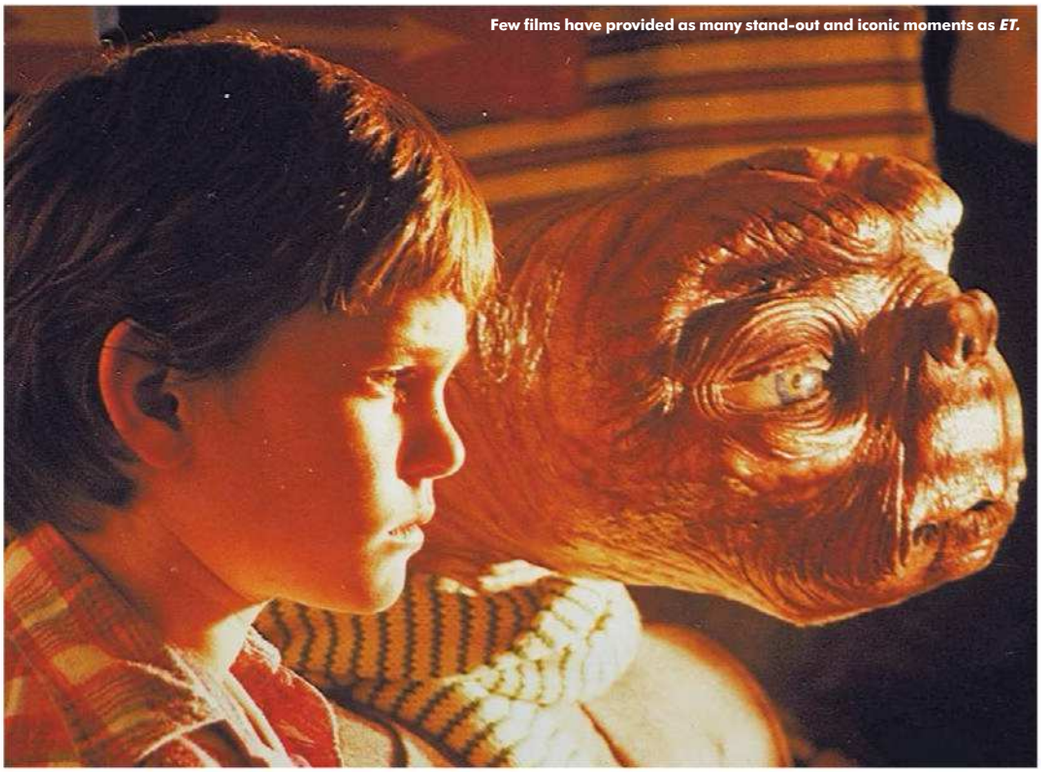
ET experiences Halloween from underneath a white sheet in a scene that was extended in the re-released version. This isn't the only time the alien gets to play dress-up, as a few moments alone with Gertie reveal. Elliott comes home to find him clad as an elderly woman, and argues that ET should be reserved some dignity.

THERE'S A BEHIND-THE-SCENES MOMENT ON THE DVD WHERE SPIELBERG DRESSES AS AN OLD LADY LIKE ET FOR THE KIDS' AMUSEMENT.

BE GOOD

The spaceship is here, and it's that time in the movie to say goodbye to the loveable alien. Adorably, he gives the flowers he brought back to life to Gertie, and tells her to 'Be good', which were the first words he learnt while watching a kid's TV show. When he points to Elliott and says 'I'll be right here', you'll be choked up.

***ET* IS MOSTLY SHOT FROM A CHILD'S EYE-LEVEL TO ALLOW A GREATER CONNECTION BETWEEN ELLIOTT AND ET COME ACROSS.**



Few films have provided as many stand-out and iconic moments as *ET*.

were all actually from Spielberg's medical team, as part of his masterplan to have the movie look as convincing as possible. It was a true sign that he believed in his vision, and wanted everyone else to see it as clearly.

Perhaps the most crucial part of conveying this authenticity was to make the titular character affable and sympathetic, despite being an obvious outsider. "I wanted ET to be special, I didn't want him to look like aliens from other movies," Spielberg recalls. "I wanted him to look so anatomically different that the audience would say 'there is no way there's a person in a suit with a zipper at the back'. That's why I wanted to make the neck very slender and long." The filmmaker used this extendable neck to convey the alien's trust in his new young companions when he reveals this vulnerable part during the closet scene. His appearance was the work of Carlo Rambaldi, an Italian special effects artist who was known for his work on *Alien* and *King Kong*. In the end, though, it was *ET* he would become best recognised for. The appearance of the loveable alien was inspired by his own painting, titled *Women Of Delta*, which shared the wrinkly wide head balanced on a tube-like neck. Mathison claims to have never thought about the planet where ET hailed from, but because he was visiting Earth as part of a botany trip, it made sense that he looked 'muddy'. Being an alien granted him special powers, too, which are revealed when Elliott slices his finger and ET heals it with his own glowing digit. "Healing was something that came up pretty early'" says Mathison on the DVD commentary, "actually, I remember that I asked kids what kind of super power they would want, either to have themselves or to have this man from outer space to have and healing came up a lot. He could take care of hurts."

"I FEEL LIKE I MADE MY MOST PERSONAL FILM WITH ET"

– STEVEN SPIELBERG

Bringing this extraordinary character to life were two dwarfs, as well as a pre-teen boy called Matthew De Meritt, who was born without legs and had mastered walking on his hands. Meritt filmed the scene where ET stumbles through the kitchen drunk before falling flat on his face. The team had to take turns in wearing the costume, of which the head alone weighed 15 pounds. Of course, if the movie had been made today, the extra-terrestrial would have probably been fashioned out of CGI. This obviously occurred to Spielberg, who

WE COME IN PEACE

The aliens you wouldn't mind landing in your back garden

SPOCK

Spock serves aboard the USS Enterprise in *Star Trek*, and is half-human, half-Vulcan. He wouldn't be too difficult to disguise, as it is only his pointy ears that give his alien heritage away. His Vulcan side makes Spock prone to reason and logic with no emotional interference.

T THE VULCAN NERVE PINCH ALLOWS SPOCK TO OVERPOWER ENEMIES WITHOUT VIOLENCE. IT WAS CREATED BY ACTOR LEONARD NIMOY.

EWOKS

A species this adorable could never harbour an evil agenda. This teddy-bear-like race come from the forest moon of Endor, appearing in *Return Of The Jedi*. It is thanks to their help that the Battle of Endor against the Galactic Empire ended in victory.

T THE EWOKS ARE NAMED AFTER THE MIWOK, A NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBE, INDIGENOUS TO THE REDWOOD FOREST.

CLANGERS

The Clangers don't do Earth visits; they prefer to reside on a blue planet that resembles the Moon. These mice-like creatures speak in whistles, feast on soup made by the Soup Dragon, and enjoy living in harmony. This stop animation was broadcast on the BBC from 1969-1972.

T THEY ARE CALLED CLANGERS AFTER THE SOUND THE DOOR (DUSTBIN LID) TO THEIR BURROWS MADE WHEN IT WAS OPENED.

Nobody can forget the tear-jerking ending.

re-released the film for its 20th anniversary with digitally re-mastered scenes. This cosmetic surgery was extremely subtle out of respect for Rambaldi's original creation, but ILM's CGI ET (acronym overload) enabled more accurate facial expressions that allowed for the inclusion of a bath scene that was previously cut because the puppet looked too 'stiff'. The gun-toting government officials seen in the original movie had bothered Spielberg, especially after his first child was born, so these were removed and replaced with walkie-talkies. There was also a line where the mother forbids her son to go out dressed as a 'terrorist', but post 9/11 this was replaced with the word 'hippy'. One scene that remained on the cutting room floor was a cameo from Harrison Ford as the school Principal. Ford had just finished working with Spielberg on *Raiders,* and he was married to writer Melissa Mathison at the time, but despite the scene concealing his famous face, the director felt it would be too distracting for the audience.

Ultimately, this re-release is an opportunity to appreciate how dark the film actually is. Its depiction of suburbia isn't the pruned hedges and bleached smiles of *Stepford Wives*, but rather a murky image of a broken family. This can easily be lost in the pure joy of ET's innocent antics and the box office figures declaring it one of the most successful films of all time. Scooping $792,910,554 worldwide, it's a wonder that there was never an *ET II*. Allegedly, Spielberg and Mathison penned a treatment for a sequel that would see Elliott and his friends attacked by evil aliens and seeking out their friend for help, but a wise decision was made to refrain from a cash-in that could taint this rare being – a Hollywood blockbuster with a heart.

The **E.T. ANNIVERSARY EDITION** is available on Blu-ray from Universal Studios

ALIEN OBSESSION

Spielberg has shaped alien entertainment for many moons now. Starting with *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* in 1977, closely followed by *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial* in '82, he has created motherships and Martians that have influenced the way we see these beings. This obsession with UFOs has hovered over his whole career, whether it's been at the helm of less-than remarkable works such as *War Of The World* (2005) or *Indiana Jones And The Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull* (2008).

Even when he has vacated the director's chair, the 67-year-old has produced **batteries not included*, the *Men In Black* movies, the *Transformers* franchise, *Cowboys & Aliens* and *Super 8*. He's even ventured into television territory with alien abduction and invasion series *Taken* and *Falling Skies*. Clearly, this is where the money lies, but the director himself has admitted in interviews that he does have a genuine fascination with UFOs and the close encounters that members of the public have claimed to have had over the years.

WHY IS ET A MODERN CLASSIC?

1. HEART-WARMING

Those who fail to shed a tear while watching this movie should seriously question whether they are of alien descent themselves. It's a story about friendship and compassion that remains emotive while never erring on the cheesy side.

2. LAUGH OUT LOUD

The sight of ET dressed as an old woman, stumbling around drunk, or hidden under a sheet in the guise of a ghoul is a giggle. He's always up for a laugh, that alien. Even before his controversial CGI makeover, ET was achingly real, and it was these little moments that helped to animate him.

3. PHONE HOME

This instant soundbyte has sparked numerous copycats in adverts, movies and television shows and the image of him riding in the basket of a flying bicycle has become iconic – practically engraved on the retinas of movie fans.

4. THE KIDS AREN'T ANNOYING

Child actors are noted for having a tendency to over-play scenes, especially when an outburst of emotion is called for. The children here, notably Thomas and Barrymore, put in performances well beyond their years, never taking you out of the moment.

5. CAREFULLY CRAFTED

Inspired by his parents' divorce, Spielberg clearly poured all his efforts into making this movie as realistic for the cast and viewers as much as is humanly possible. He later said this was "one of the most perfect films I ever made".

TRANSFORMERS

Transformers are very handy to have on your side, as Sam (Shia LaBeouf) discovers. The Autobots can 'transform' into everyday machinery in order to fight the evil Decepticons, which have the same power. Beware the deadly avalanche of toys that follow in their wake.

TRANSFORMERS' TAGLINE 'THEIR WAR. OUR WORLD' WAS ORIGINALLY MEANT FOR *AVP: ALIEN VS PREDATOR* (2004).

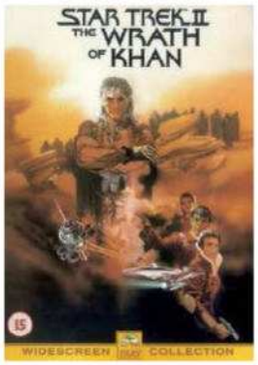
THE DOCTOR

The time traveller with two hearts skips through space in his TARDIS, audiences are well accustomed to this Saturday night saviour. Whether you'd want him materialising in your garden depends on the incarnation, but he is usually friendly enough.

DOCTOR WHO IS THE LONGEST RUNNING SCI-FI SERIES EVER MADE FOR TELEVISION, STARTING IN 1963.

RELEASED IN 1982, STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN RESTORED THE REPUTATION OF A FRANCHISE THAT HAD BEEN HOBBLED BY A LACKLUSTRE FIRST RELEASE. THE FILM ITSELF IS CONSIDERED A CLASSIC, AND THE STORY OF ITS PRODUCTION IS AS INTERESTING AS THE FINISHED PRODUCT ITSELF. FROM THE SIDELINING OF GENE RODDENBERRY, TO THE THEMES OF DEATH, AGE, REVENGE AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN, WE TAKE A LOOK BACK AT ONE OF THE FINEST FILMS FROM THE STAR TREK FRANCHISE…

THE WRATH OF KHAN



Film

RUNNING TIME: 112 mins
RELEASE DATE: 4 June 1982
DIRECTOR: Nicholas Meyer
WRITERS: Harve Bennett, Nicholas Meyer (uncredited)
CAST: William Shatner, Ricardo Montalban, Leonard Nimoy

About

Star Trek: The Motion Picture was released to high anticipation in 1979, but the film failed to provoke much interest among critics or fans for what was perceived as its plodding, ponderous narrative and misguided approach. The second film, by Nicholas Meyer, took a far different approach, being much more action-orientated, and this paid off. Many reviewers at the time felt that *The Wrath Of Khan* was what the first film should have been, and its success dictated the direction of the franchise for many years to come. More than that, it inspired a new wave of interest in the franchise, which had been in danger of dying out previously.

"No, no you can't get away! From Hell's heart I stab at thee! For hate's sake, I spit my last breath at thee!" These are the words of the iconic Khan, Captain James Tiberius Kirk's longtime nemesis and, to many fans, the best villain in the *Star Trek* pantheon. He is an integral part of what many believe to be the best *Trek* film: *The Wrath Of Khan*.

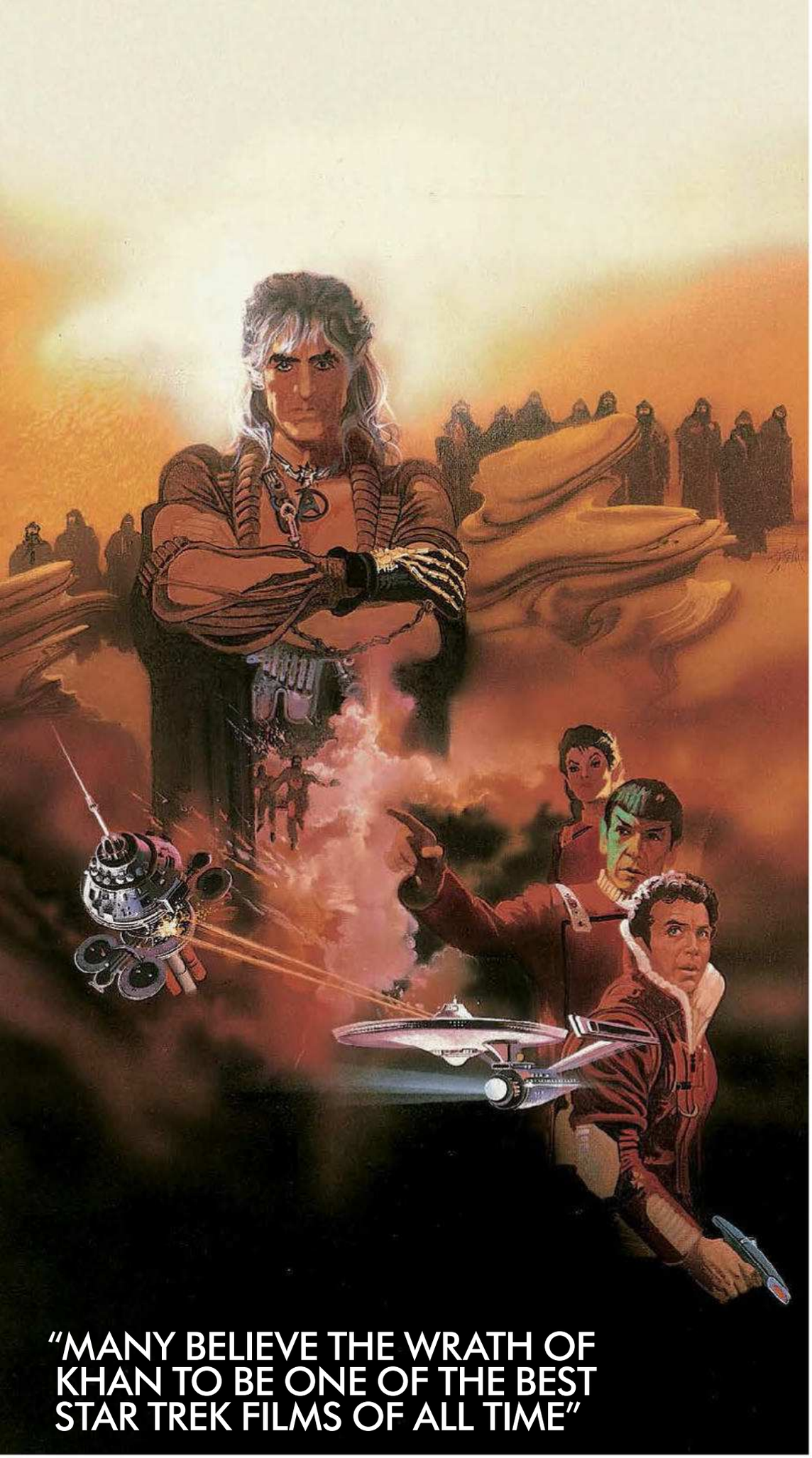
Star Trek: The Motion Picture prompted massive queues outside cinemas nationwide upon its release in 1979, some stretching back as far as several blocks. Unfortunately, it would turn out to be something of a critical flop. Gene Roddenberry, the creator of the original series in 1966 and its overseer since then, wrote his own sequel that involved Kirk, Spock, McCoy et al using the Guardian Of Forever, the time travel device from the show's most acclaimed episode, 'The City On The Edge Of Forever' to stop the Klingons from preventing the assassination of John F Kennedy, thus irrevocably changing the course of human history. However, Paramount executives, who placed the blame for the first movie's structural faults and Roddenberry's difficult working environment on the man himself, rejected the script, and removed him from the creative process almost entirely, giving him the pseudo-ceremonial role of executive consultant.

Harve Bennett, who at the time was a relatively new producer, was brought on board to keep the project fresh and, most importantly, on budget. Paramount was particularly wary of the costs involved, considering their poor return on the $45 million first film. A treatment was written by Bennett in 1980 which involved the villain Khan Noonien Singh from the original series episode 'Space Seed'. Much of the thinking inside the studio was that the first film, aside from its issues with pacing and confused mix of baroque overtones and cerebral pontification, lacked a definable antagonist, someone for the audience to focus on. Khan, Bennett decided, after watching all of the original series' episodes, was the character for the job. He then brought aboard Jack B Sowards to flesh out the idea into a script, which led to the introduction of the Genesis weapon as a plot device, then called the Omega System.

Numerous problems continued to plague the script production, with Spock's death being moved to later in the story after a copy of the screenplay leaked to immense fan dissatisfaction. The Omega System, which was originally the most powerful weapon in the Federation's arsenal, became a terraforming mechanism instead. It was eventually recommended to Bennett, as deadlines for storyboards and other associated materials began to loom, that Nicholas Meyer be brought on board to help polish the script and direct. Meyer had already made his name as the director of the *Sherlock Holmes* production *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution*, and although he'd never seen an episode of *Star Trek*, he worked unpaid and uncredited to produce a script for the 12 day deadline. "Basically, when I made the suggestion that I take all the things we liked from the other scripts and put them together into a new script, Harve Bennett and Bob Sallin (producer) said that ILM said that if we don't have a script in 12 days, they cannot guarantee delivery of the shots in time for the opening", said Meyer in an interview with TrekMovie.com. "I said, 'I can do this in 12 days, let's get on with it.' And they said 'we couldn't make your deal in 12 days', and I said 'forget my deal, forget the credit, forget the money… I'm here as the director, but if I am not here as the writer, there is not going to be any movie.' "

Meyer's rewrite set the tone. Utilising a very maritime, naval feel, he tried to capture a sense of swashbuckling in outer space, something that he cited as being inspired by CS Forester's Horatio Hornblower books, without knowing that this was exactly the feel attempted by Roddenberry and William Shatner in the original series. Despite this, Roddenberry disliked the script, but having already been "bumped upwards" – in the words of Shatner – to the role of executive consultant, his protestations largely went unanswered.

In essence, *The Wrath Of Khan* is a film with very distinct themes. Revenge, of course, is the most obvious one, but it's also about the aging of the characters, expressed early on in the film through McCoy telling Kirk that he must regain his command, that it's where he belongs. The character of Khan was also radically changed from being the superman of the original series to one that is more analogous to Satan of Christian mythology, a fallen angel. His frequent referencing of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, of course, helped to re-define the character, as well as the portrayal by Ricardo Montalban. The actor, who had also originally played



"MANY BELIEVE THE WRATH OF KHAN TO BE ONE OF THE BEST STAR TREK FILMS OF ALL TIME"

A DISH BEST SERVED COLD

The best moments in The Wrath Of Khan

THE KOBAYASHI MARU

Now ingrained into *Star Trek* lore, the Kobayashi Maru is significant not only to Kirk, but also serves as a great opener to the film, highlighting Kirk's dissatisfaction with the state of his career, and effectively introducing Saavik as a new character. Indeed, such was its impact that it featured again in JJ Abrams' 2009 instalment.

T THE SHOT OF THE SHIPS IN THE KOBAYASHI MARU SEQUENCE IS RE-USED FOOTAGE FROM *STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE*.

GENESIS

The animation of the Genesis project was pure *Star Trek*; less aggressive than the Death Star of *Star Wars*, but just as lethal. Its balance of intelligence and action perfectly emphasises the best qualities of the series – a thinking man's science fiction franchise, rather than a joy ride through the cosmos.

T THE STARFIELD EFFECT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FILM WAS CREATED BY POINTING THE CAMERA AT THE CEILING IN A PLANETARIUM,

I HAVE BEEN, AND ALWAYS SHALL BE, YOUR FRIEND

With Khan defeated, the audience is blindsided by the news that Spock is dying. A particularly emotional farewell between him and Kirk is heart-wrenching and upsetting, and isn't dulled by the fact that Spock later returns in the third film, reborn on the Genesis planet.

T WILLIAM SHATNER INITIALLY OBJECTED TO A PANE OF GLASS BEING BETWEEN HIS AND NIMOY'S CHARACTER, BUT WAS OVERRULED.

KHAN!

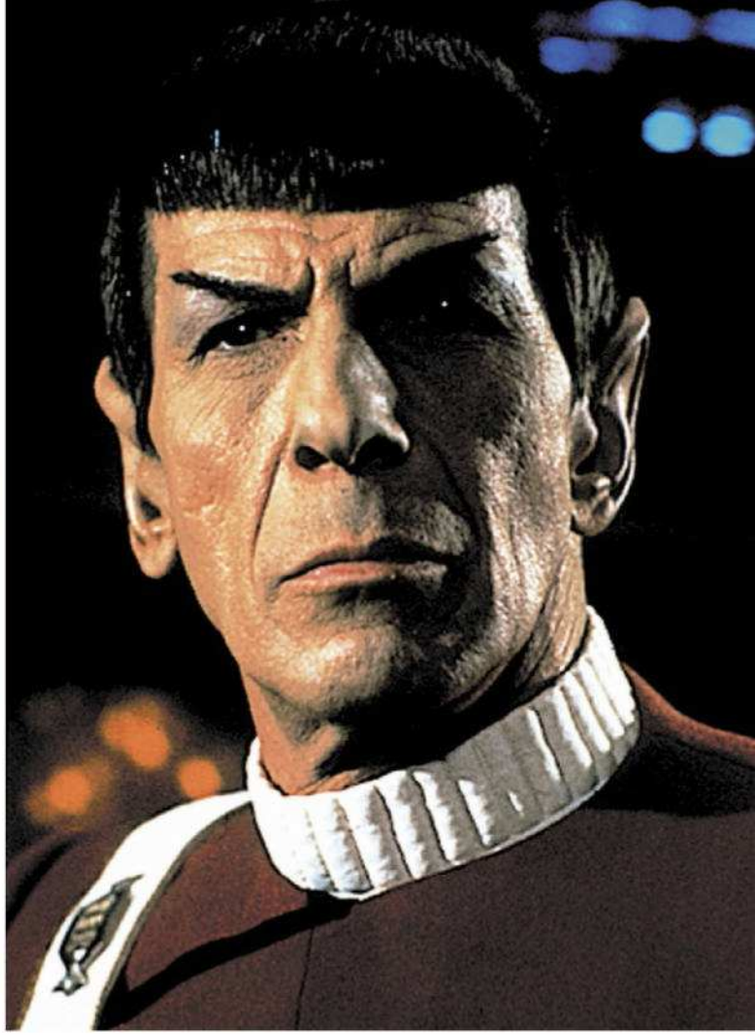
Probably the most famous scene of the film, this was apparently a spontaneous reading of the line from William Shatner. Neither the actor nor the director could have predicted the impact that it would later have in popular culture (particularly *Star Trek* fan culture), nor the memorable nature of just one word.

T *THE WRATH OF KHAN* MARKED THE FIRST TIME THAT A FILM HAD BEEN MADE AS A SPECIFIC SEQUEL TO ONE PARTICULAR EPISODE OF A TELEVISION SERIES.

THE FINAL INSULT

The fact that Khan and Kirk never actually meet on screen does nothing to lessen the dramatic impact of Khan's final exchange with the captain. Part monologue, part half-silent, two-way dialogue, it's a poetic and eloquent use of classic literature transposed to a modern entertainment setting.

T THIS IS THE ONLY FILM THAT DOESN'T FEATURE THE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF ANY KLINGONS – EVEN THE 2009 FILM HAD A KLINGON SCENE, ALTHOUGH IT WAS LATER CUT.



the role in the Sixties episode, brought several changes to the costume and design, emphasising the masculinity of the character through his own tremendous physique. Although rumours often circulate that Montalban wore some sort of prosthetic chestpiece, the truth of the matter is that the actor was simply in superb physical shape for his age.

Set design and costuming was, in fact, a big issue for the production. Under pressure to keep the budget lower than the relatively wild expenditure of *The Motion Picture*, the crew had to find ways to recycle sets from the previous film, much of which had simply gone into storage once filming had finished, and tweak the uniforms to suit the mood of the film. The bridge of the Reliant was simply a redress of the Enterprise bridge, for example, while around 65 per cent of the film was shot using existing sets. The distinctive uniforms of the Starfleet personnel in the film, which would stay until *The Next Generation* began its own film cycle, were old designs that had been dyed a dark red with collar alterations, but made to look particularly ordered and smart. Khan's followers, by contrast, had messy and untidy costumes, creating a simple contrast through look more than the materials used.

"TO KEEP THE BUDGET LOW, SETS FROM THE ORIGINAL WERE EXTENSIVELY RE-USED"

In terms of special effects, the film was something of a landmark, with the need to speed up the production process necessitating the extensive use of computer-generated special effects. The animation of the Genesis project's effects, which lasted only a few moments during the film, became iconic both inside and outside the special effects community. Although models were re-used as much as possible from previous films in order to save money, several new ones were created in order to show the extensive damage to the Reliant after its battle with the Enterprise. Final touches were applied in terms of the score by James Horner, as Jerry Goldsmith was unavailable, and with additional effects work by Lucasfilm's Computer Graphics Group, who would later split from the company to form Pixar.

Principal photography on *The Wrath Of Khan* began 9 November 1981, lasting until 29 January 1982. After so much was made about the budget, Meyer

FOILED AGAIN

The less impressive moments

BOY SCOUT?

The inclusion of Kirk's son was always a bit of a bad idea, even if it added gravitas to *The Undiscovered Country*. Even more strange was the relationship between Kirk and Carol Marcus, who didn't want him involved in her son's upbringing, yet speaks very highly of him.

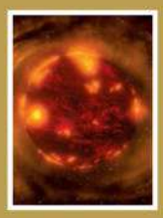
T ALL OF KHAN'S FOLLOWERS SEEN IN THE FILM WERE ACTUALLY MALE CHIPPENDALE DANCERS AT THE TIME.

I NEVER FORGET A FACE

Khan's recognition of Chekov doesn't really ring true, considered that 'Space Seed' was a Season One episode, while Chekov didn't join the Enterprise crew until the second season. It was later explained away as the two meeting off screen, but it's a cheap retcon.

T KIM CATTRALL WAS INITIALLY THE FIRST CHOICE TO PLAY SAAVIK, BUT KIRSTIE ALLEY EVENTUALLY FILLED THE ROLE.

THE GENESIS PLANET



While the animation and effects work on the Genesis device is impressive, the nebula coalescing into a fully formed planet is hard to swallow. True, *Star Trek* isn't slavish to scientific accuracy, but it's a bit of a long shot to expect audiences to believe that could ever happen.

T THE IMAGE OF THE ENTERPRISE ON THE CONTROL PANEL IS A RE-USED PROP FROM THE ABORTED *PHASE II* SEQUEL.

The Wrath Of Khan provided many iconic moments in *Star Trek* lore.

eventually delivered it for $11 million – a rise on the initial budget of $8.5 million, when Paramount executives, impressed by initial dailies and footage, approved extra money. It went on to become the sixth-highest grossing film of 1982, and was also a critical hit to boot. Most reviewers reacted positively to the change of pacing from the lacklustre *Motion Picture*, and to Spock's death scene, which was surmised to have added a much-needed sense of personal drama outside of the manic conflict between Kirk and Khan. Indeed, Spock's death was a major gamble – leaked versions of the script had inspired fan outrage, and test audiences hadn't responded well to the initial cut. Interestingly, the death was supposed to be final for the character initially, but actor Leonard Nimoy reportedly asked for the option to return from the Genesis planet in *The Search For Spock*, having had a very positive experience filming.

Critical and financial success are the keystones of a film's worth and its continued longevity, of course, but in a cultural sense the film also had a huge impact. Nearly every scene is regarded as iconic within the *Star Trek* community – the Kobayashi Maru being a major plot point in JJ Abrams' 2009 film. Kirk's famous screaming of Khan's name, purportedly an ad lib by William Shatner, has also become a widespread element in popular culture, consistently parodied and referenced elsewhere. More than that, *The Wrath Of Khan* is considered to have broken the unwritten rule that a sequel will always be poorer than its antecedent. Of the *Star Trek* films, it's arguably the best of them all.

STAR TREK: THE WRATH OF KHAN is available on Blu-ray from Paramount

WOUNDING THE ENTERPRISE

Much is made later on in the film of Khan's inexperience in space combat, but he seems to do a pretty good job of messing up the Enterprise in the first encounter. It's there for dramatic effect, clearly, and it works, but taken in context with the rest of the film, it doesn't quite fit.

THE WRATH OF KHAN IS THE FIRST FILM TO OFFICIALLY ESTABLISH *STAR TREK* AS BEING SET IN THE 23RD CENTURY.

AMAZING GRACE

Spock's death scene is one of the greatest sequences in the Star Trek franchise, but his somewhat saccharine send-off, to an extent, cheapens the emotional impact of his shuffling off the mortal coil. That's not even factoring in James Doohan's rendition of *Amazing Grace*.

MCCOY WAS ORIGINALLY SUPPOSED TO HAVE PRONOUNCED SPOCK'S DEATH BY SAYING "HE'S DEAD, JIM."

CHOP AND CHANGE

From its original script to the final presentation of the film, *The Wrath Of Khan* underwent many structural and superficial changes. It was originally meant to be called *The Undiscovered Country*, a title which eventually went to the sixth film in the series, and the second that Meyer would direct. Several other names were also put forward, such as *The Vengeance Of Khan*. Meyer himself thought the title ridiculous, and also pointed out that Paramount would face problems with George Lucas also making a film that was at the time titled *Revenge Of The Jedi*. Paramount changed the title to *The Wrath Of Khan*, which Meyer also hated. Lucas, of course, later renamed his film to *Return Of The Jedi*, rendering the whole process somewhat obsolete in hindsight. Other changes included shifting Spock's death scene, which was originally located at the beginning of the film, and adding in his mind meld with McCoy, which was included as a way to bring the character back, and became the major plot point in the third film, *The Search For Spock*.

WHY IS THE WRATH OF KHAN A MODERN CLASSIC?

1. RENEW! RENEW!

After the disappointment of *The Motion Picture*, *The Wrath Of Khan* represented the last chance for *Star Trek*. Its success inspired a renewed interest in the franchise, which is still going strong nine films and four television series later.

2. THE KHAN EFFECT

Gene Roddenberry mostly shied away from the more militaristic aspects of *Star Trek*, but Meyer imbued a very naval texture into the fabric of *The Wrath Of Khan*. This would heavily influence the feel of the later television series and, to an extent, the films.

3. A CLASSIC REVENGE STORY

The theme of revenge gave the film a weight that's often missing from other instalments. The blend of Christian allegory and its literary antecedents combine to give an almost Shakespearean feel. That is, if Shakespeare wrote about spaceship combat.

4. FAN POWER

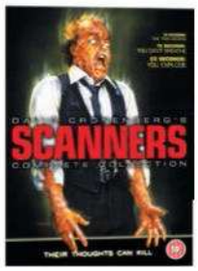
The film is commonly regarded as one of the best *Star Trek* films, and is almost always ranked highly among critics' lists. Meyer also went on to direct *The Undiscovered Country*, which was also the last film to primarily use the original cast.

5. BOLDLY GOING

Much of the criticism for *Star Trek* comes from what many see as a slightly formulaic approach to storytelling. By killing off a main character, and resolving the story arc of a favourite villain from the series, Meyer's approach paid off.

DESPITE DIRECTING SUCH DARING AND INTELLIGENT TRIUMPHS AS VIDEODROME, THE FLY, DEAD RINGERS AND CRASH, THE FILM ABOUT TELEPATHS MAKING HEADS EXPLODE HAS ARGUABLY MADE THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON POP CULTURE OF ANY DAVID CRONENBERG FILM. HE HAS OFTEN CITED IT AS ONE OF HIS WORST FILMMAKING EXPERIENCES, BUT IT'S A BONA FIDE CULT CLASSIC. LET'S CLOSE OUR EYES AND FOCUS OUR THOUGHTS ON WHY WE LOVE SCANNERS…

SCANNERS



Film

RUNNING TIME: 103 minutes
RELEASE DATE: 1981
DIRECTOR: David Cronenberg
WRITER: David Cronenberg
CAST: Stephen Lack, Jennifer O'Neill, Michael Ironside, Patrick McGoohan

About

Powerful corporation Consec announces the existence of psychics, or Scanners. Rogue Scanner Darryl Revok (Michael Ironside) takes this opportunity to announce his presence by exploding the demonstration leader's head and declaring war on Consec and, by extension, humankind. Scientist Dr Paul Ruth (Patrick McGoohan) finds unwitting Scanner Cameron Vale (Stephen Lack) and trains him to hunt Revok down. Cameron teams up with fellow Scanner Kim (Jennifer O'Neill) to find the truth about their secret program and put a stop to Revok.

You can't underestimate the importance of a good tagline. *Scanners* has three of them. "There are 4 billion people on Earth. 237 are Scanners. They have the most terrifying powers ever created…and they are winning." Next up: "10 Seconds: The Pain Begins. 15 Seconds: You Can't Breathe. 20 Seconds: You Explode." Finally: "…Their thoughts can kill!" But despite this great work from the marketing team, there's one moment that sold the film to generations of genre fans: the exploding head. Michael Ironside cocks his head and purrs while the man next to him twitches, before his head detonates in a fantastically gory mess.

David Cronenberg isn't known as the King of Venereal Horror for nothing. He has explored the subject of the body in revolt and transgressive sexuality and pushed the boundaries of taste with an intelligence and wit that quickly set him apart from the other low-budget blood-and-guts merchants of the late Seventies. Films like *Videodrome* and *The Fly* are arguably better regarded than *Scanners*, but think of a Cronenberg image and that exploding head comes to mind as quickly as Max Renn's stomach vagina or Jeff Goldblum's Brundlefly.

By the time *Scanners* came around, Cronenberg was already becoming a household name. He'd made three controversial and profitable horror films with *Shivers*, *Rabid* and *The Brood*. After the successful release of the latter, the director was offered the biggest budget he'd ever been given to make his next film: over $4 million. Excited by the possibilities of having money up front, Cronenberg remembered a script he'd started in the early Seventies called 'The Sensitives', which had also briefly been titled 'Telepathy 2000', and got to work.

The budget might have been sorted, but time was not on Cronenberg's side. Once the deal had been signed, he had just two weeks before pre-production began. A cast was assembled, including veteran character actor Patrick McGoohan and future cult icon Michael Ironside, but the script was far from finished. The production crew was at the mercy of Cronenberg's typewriter, waiting to hear what sets would need to be built and what, or who, was going to explode. Scenes were written and rewritten throughout the shooting process, which inevitably led to a difficult atmosphere on set.

It's one thing improvising an indie drama, but sci-fi is quite a different matter. In an interview with Chris Rodley in his book *Cronenberg On Cronenberg*, the director remembered the difficulty of creating a world that suggested the future without explicitly stating it. "You're improvising the design of a whole invented world," said Cronenberg. "You're not going to walk down the street and find a great location." And while that bigger budget was a great asset, it was tax-shelter money, which meant that the principal photography budget had to be spent before 31 December if the financiers were going to get their tax write-off. This would eventually lead to two months of second-unit filming and nine months of editing. "There was a tremendous pressure to lie to people about things," he told Rodley. "The desperation to get the fucking movie off the ground before the new year was huge." However, he was ultimately very happy that he was forced to shoot in the depth of winter. "Can you see *Scanners* shot in the lushness of summer? It was meant to be deadly – a cold, harsh, nasty film. It was perfect."

> "WHEN SHE SAW THE REAL SCRIPT, SHE STARTED TO SOB AND CRY IN THE TRAILER"
> DAVID CRONENBERG

It wasn't just the lack of a script that was creating an unpleasant atmosphere. The first day of shooting took place by an expressway. When a truck driver chose to watch the film crew instead of the road, he drove over a smaller car, killing the two women inside. The filmmaker was also having problems with his cast. After Jennifer O'Neill had been cast as Kim, the beautiful scanner who sides with Cameron in his hunt for the truth, Cronenberg discovered that a producer had sent her a script with all the violence cut out. "When she saw the real script, she started to sob and cry in the trailer and was really disturbed and upset and didn't want to be a part of this movie," he told Rodley.

The biggest star in the cast was *The Prisoner* star McGoohan, and his terse

Part of *Scanners*' legacy was turning Michael Ironside into a cult icon.

The film's standout moment arrives suddenly and unexpectedly.

DAVE 'DEPRAVE' CRONENBERG

The body horror king's five most shocking moments

SHIVERS (1975)

Our hero Roger St Luc lasts the whole film without being infected. But when he makes it to the roof he's surrounded and pushed into the swimming pool. As the lovely (and infected) Nurse Forsythe appears from the water, we realise he's going to lose.

T *SHIVERS* PROVOKED OUTRAGE IN CANADA WHEN THE PRESS REVEALED THAT IT HAD BEEN FUNDED WITH TAXPAYER MONEY.

VIDEODROME (1983)

After watching a warning about the dangers of *Videodrome*, Max (James Woods)'s television pulsates as his missing girlfriend moves closer to the screen. When the TV responds to his touch, Max pushes his head into the screen and her giant mouth.

T THE VIDEO CASSETTES THAT ARE INSERTED INTO MAX'S STOMACH CAVITY ARE BETAMAX. VHS TAPES WERE TOO BIG.

THE FLY (1986)

Seth Brundle (Jeff Goldblum) feels like a superman after successfully teleporting himself. He heads to a sleazy bar and challenges a huge patron to an arm-wrestle. The big lug isn't laughing when Seth breaks his wrist. There are more gross-out moments, but this is the biggest shock.

T *THE FLY* WAS PRODUCED BY LEGENDARY COMIC MEL BROOKS, WHO ALSO PRODUCED DAVID LYNCH'S *THE ELEPHANT MAN*.

DEAD RINGERS (1988)

Gynaecologists Beverly and Elliot frequently swap places, but when a woman comes between them Bev starts to lose his grip on his sanity. He commissions a series of instruments to operate on "mutant women", leading to a shocking scene which shows little but implies much.

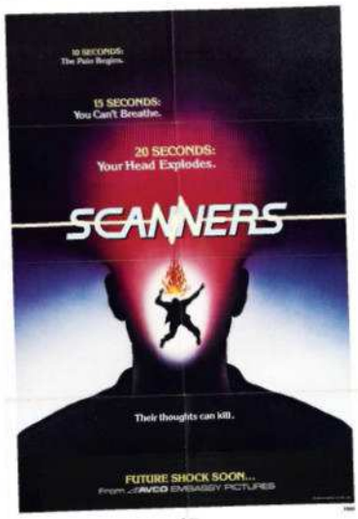
T ROBERT DE NIRO AND WILLIAM HURT BOTH TURNED DOWN JEREMY IRONS' ROLE IN *DEAD RINGERS*.

CRASH (1996)

There's no need to pick a single most-shocking scene from *Crash*, based on JG Ballard's novel in which people are sexually aroused by car accidents. It proved so upsetting that Westminster council banned the film, apparently assuming people in Westminster never left.

T BALLARD'S NOVEL IS NOT ONLY WRITTEN IN THE FIRST PERSON; THE LEAD CHARACTER ALSO SHARES HIS NAME.

"THE MOOD AND TONE OF SCANNERS SETS IT APART FROM SIMILARLY HIGH-CONCEPT SCI-FI HORRORS"



***Scanners* paved the way for Cronenberg to continue to astound audiences.**

performance fits Cronenberg's cold vision for the film rather well. Dr Ruth is a jaded and impatient mentor; there's barely any indication that he likes Cameron at all or cares about what happens to him. In an early scene in which the Consec decision-makers are seated around a boardroom table, McGoohan is slumped so far in his chair that he's almost horizontal.

While he gave a typically forceful performance, McGoohan proved to be difficult to work with. Cronenberg told *The Hollywood Reporter* that he "had extreme Catholic views about sexuality. My leading lady, Jennifer O'Neill, came to me distraught and said, 'Patrick said, 'Are you a whore? Are you a slut?' And he started to lay into her because she'd had five husbands." It wasn't just his Catholicism that caused issues on the set; McGoohan's alcoholism was taking its toll. Cronenberg told Rodley that "…he was so angry. His self-hatred came out as anger against everything and everybody. He said to me, 'If I didn't drink I'd be afraid I'd kill someone.'"

Then there's the central performance from Stephen Lack as Cameron Vale. Lack was better known for being a painter than an actor, and his performance is as blank as an untouched canvas. The oft-repeated rumour is that Cronenberg cast him for his striking blue eyes, but there's a reason why everyone remembers Michael Ironside's performance.

So with all these problems, how did *Scanners* become a cult classic? It's not as if its flaws are easily ignored. The middle section is muddled and flat, promising ideas aren't properly explored, the ending feels rushed and there's not nearly enough Ironside. What do we all see in it?

To start with, its mood and tone sets *Scanners* apart from similarly high-concept sci-fi horrors. The winter setting is indeed perfect; there's barely a moment of warmth and no safe place for our hero. Moreover, the eventual twist is a delightfully unpleasant reversal of the paranoid conspiracy plot. Cronenberg's subversive sensibility (in this case a neat reflection of the perennial fear of pre-natal medication) collides with the more ridiculous sci-fi moments, such as Kim complaining of being scanned by a woman's unborn child or Cameron destroying a computer system by scanning it over the phone. Even the name of the evil program, Ripe, is a bad joke couched in a gruesome context.

Then there's Ironside. *Scanners* kick-started a career of growling villain roles and decades of scenery-chewing

THE BEST OF IRONSIDE

Our favourite Michael Ironside performances

TOTAL RECALL (1990)

There are many reasons to love Paul Verhoeven's ultra-violent classic. One of them is Ironside's chief henchman Richter, who pursues Arnie's amnesiac spy (or is he?) all the way to Mars for big bad Cohaagen, and has his arms severed by a lift for his troubles. Still, we'll see him at the party.

DAVID CRONENBERG WAS ORIGINALLY ATTACHED, AND WORKED ON IT FOR CLOSE TO A YEAR BEFORE DROPPING OUT.

HIGHLANDER 2: THE QUICKENING (1991)

One year later, and Ironside took chief villain duties in this sequel. While it's remembered for being butchered in the edit, suggesting the immortals were aliens and somehow bringing back Sean Connery, Ironside's peace-hating General Katana was a redeeming feature.

DIRECTOR RUSSELL MULCAHY HAS SINCE CREATED A DIRECTOR'S CUT, WHICH IS CLOSER TO HIS ORIGINAL VISION.

STARSHIP TROOPERS (1997)

Ironside reteamed with Paul Verhoeven for this action-packed satire, and took a more heroic role. His character, grizzled teacher-turned General Jean Rasczak, instructs all-American Johnny Rico in the ways of duty, responsibility and heroism before being gruesomely murdered by a giant space insect.

MANY OF VERHOEVEN'S VISUAL CHOICES WERE INSPIRED BY LENI RIEFENSTAHL'S NAZI PROPAGANDA FILMS.

***Scanners* will forever be remembered for this iconic scene.**

The passive Cameron stands in contrast to the casual menace of Revok.

for the actor. Daryl Revok gets a hell of an introduction: an apparently guileless member of the audience at the Scanner demonstration, he plays along ("Do I have to close my eyes?") all the way to the explosive conclusion. The character is mostly kept on the sidelines until the finale, but every appearance is gripping. By the time Cameron finally confronts Revok, we're definitely rooting for the bad guy. "Alright, we do this the Scanner way," he hisses. "I'm gonna suck your brain dry."

The final battle is a blood-soaked triumph as the two men begin their psychic duel. Skin bubbles and ruptures. Revok compels Cameron to claw a chunk of flesh from his face. Finally Cameron's eyes explode, and his body catches fire. Later Cronenberg films would dwell on prosthetics and make-up in more detail, but *Scanners* uses sudden shocking eruptions of gore to great effect. In terms of effects it ranks among his best, particularly that first explosion, which was achieved by effects artist Chris Walas introducing some offal to a shotgun.

While it's not as transgressive as *Shivers*, as clever as *Videodrome* or as moving as *The Fly*, there's something unsettling and outrageous about *Scanners* that ensures its place in cinematic history. The combination of a convincingly unpleasant near future, an outlandish science fiction plot and superb effects work make it effortlessly entertaining and impossible to forget. Two sequels followed, and a TV series was recently mooted and dropped. But whatever happens to the *Scanners* project, you'll never forget that sudden, shocking… Boom.

SCANNERS is available on Blu-ray from AVCO Embassy Pictures

THE MACHINIST (2004)

Known as the film for which Christian Bale lost all that weight, Brad Anderson's twisty thriller has a strong turn from Ironside as Miller, who works alongside the skinny insomniac. Ironside pays the price when Bale falls asleep at the switch as his arm is inexorably drawn into a drill press.

BALE LOST 28KG FOR THE FILM BY EATING A TIN OF TUNA AND AN APPLE A DAY BEFORE GAINING IT BACK FOR *BATMAN BEGINS*.

SURVEILLANCE (2008)

Jennifer Lynch's underrated serial killer film gives Ironside a meaty supporting role as the grumpy police captain supervising an FBI interrogation at his desert police station. A film full of weird performances (hello, Bill Pullman) and unpleasant characters finds Ironside holding his own.

SURVEILLANCE WAS LYNCH'S FIRST FILM SINCE HER 1993 DEBUT *BOXING HELENA* FAILED WITH AUDIENCES AND CRITICS.

CRONENBERG'S FAILED EXPERIMENTS

Films that never saw the light of day

Despite not having a completed script, Cronenberg finished *Scanners* and implanted exploding heads in pop culture consciousness forever. But over the years he has been attached to a number of projects that have fallen through. After *Scanners*, 'David Cronenberg's Frankenstein' was announced, but quickly fell through. He has recently talked about what his ideas for a sequel to *The Fly* would have been, pursuing the themes rather than the characters, but Fox went with a more direct approach without him. He worked on *Total Recall* before dropping out and, almost unbelievably, was one of several directors poised to return Sharon Stone's uncrossing legs to the cinema with *Basic Instinct 2* before sensibly pursuing other options. More recently, Cronenberg announced he was working on a sequel to his 2007 Russian gangster film *Eastern Promises*, but the studio ultimately opted against financing it.

WHY IS SCANNERS A RETRO CLASSIC?

EXPLODING HEAD

Once you've seen actor Louis del Grande's head explode, you'll never forget it. Repeat viewings don't diminish the impact of just how…explosive it is. Hilariously, Revok tries to convince the security team that he didn't do anything.

MICHAEL IRONSIDE

With a muddled script, a powerful presence was required for the villain, and Revok is the perfect combination of quiet threat and terrifying rage. Co-star Stephen Lack never stood a chance.

THE SCANNER WAY

The apparently limitless abilities possessed by the Scanners may have been due to the unfinished script, but it makes for an awesome superpower. They can control people's heart rates, trash computer systems and even set people on fire.

THE CRONENBERG EFFECT

Even though it's less cerebral than his later work, *Scanners* is clearly a David Cronenberg film with the intelligence and the unsettling atmosphere that goes with it.

SCANNER DUEL

After we've been made to sit through several scenes of blank slate Stephen Lack fumbling his way to the centre of the conspiracy plot, we're finally rewarded with a gruesome final confrontation between Cameron and Revok. 1982 would see the publication of comic-book series *Akira*, and it's interesting to note the similarities in the psychic battle scenes.

THE ANATOMY OF THE PREDATOR

WHEN JIM AND JOHN THOMAS CAME UP WITH A SUITABLE PROTAGONIST FOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER'S LATEST MOVIE, LITTLE DID THEY KNOW THAT THEIR OTHERWORLDLY CREATION WOULD GO ON TO BECOME ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC MONSTERS SINCE HR GIGER'S ALIEN. WE EXAMINE THE QUINTET OF MOVIES FEATURING THE DEADLIEST HUNTER IN THE UNIVERSE...

The *Predator* franchise has been a big success for 20th Century Fox, with its three films and two crossover movies generating over $584 million off a $190 million outlay. As news of a sequel to *Predators* refuses to die, with *Iron Man 3*'s Shane Black supposedly at the helm, we felt it was the perfect time to revisit the original film and its numerous spin-offs.

Predator's origins are interesting, having sprung from a joke about Sylvester Stallone's Rocky Balboa; Hollywood executives remarked that the fictional boxer would have to battle an alien, as there was no one on Earth left to fight. Two brothers, Jim and John Thomas, took the joke seriously, and began to craft a movie about an alien that came to Earth and did just that.

"We had an idea about a brotherhood of hunters who came from another planet to hunt all kinds of things," recalls Jim Thomas on the 'Making Of…' featurette included with the *Predator* DVD. "We realised that wouldn't work very well, so we picked one hunter who was going to hunt the most dangerous species, which had to be man. And the most dangerous man was a combat soldier."

With their idea, the two brothers shipped their script around Hollywood, and it wasn't long before it came to the attention of Arnold Schwarzenegger. The Austrian actor was a hot property in Hollywood thanks to recent turns in *Conan The Barbarian*, *The Terminator* and *Commando*. Who better to be stalked by the universe's deadliest hunter?

As the script generated buzz, Fox green-lit the project and handed it over to producer Joel Silver, who had been involved with *48 Hrs* and *Commando*, and was working on Mel Gibson vehicle *Lethal Weapon* (which was released in 1987, the same year as *Predator*). Silver immediately got in touch with producer Lawrence Gordon, and together they started courting a suitable director. One of their early choices was New Zealander Geoff Murphy, who had found success with *Utu* and *The Quiet Earth*. In a 1985 interview with *OnLine Magazine*, he revealed his plans for 'Hunter', as *Predator* was then known.

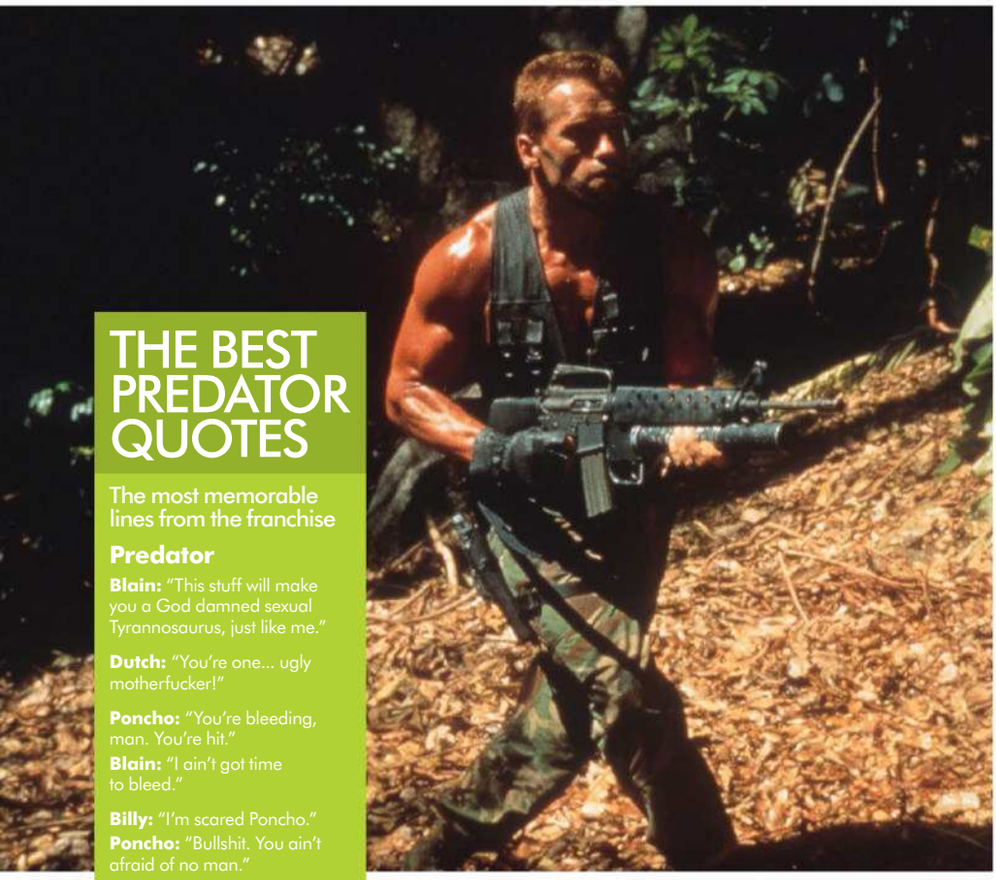
***Predator* would help cement Arnold Schwarzenegger as Hollywood's go-to action star.**

"It's called 'Hunter', and it's about an alien who comes to Earth on safari to hunt the most dangerous animal on earth – an American anti-insurgency commando. It's basically a sneaky-poo through the bush. I've done a bit of that before. There's suspense and frightening people, and I can do that. I look at it and I think, 'Yeah, I can do this picture, and I can do a really craftsman-like job on it. I can frighten people. I can probably make them laugh a few times too. I can say a little bit about the military, just in passing.' So I say yes. But Fox can still say no."

Fox did say no, and it wasn't long before he was no longer attached to 'Hunter'. It's unclear why Murphy was dropped, but in the very same interview that he had discussed the possibility of working on 'Hunter', he made it quite clear that he wasn't a fan of Schwarzenegger. He'd already turned down the chance to direct *Conan III* without meeting the franchise's star on the basis that "I didn't need to. I watched *Conan*."

With Schwarzenegger firmly attached to the project as Major Alan 'Dutch' Schaefer, Silver, Gordon and co-producer John Davis went ahead and hired John McTiernan, who would go on to have huge success in the action genre thanks to hits like *Die Hard* and *The Hunt For Red October*. At the time of *Predator*, though, he was an unknown, although his first film, the Pierce Brosnan-starring *Nomads*, suggested that he'd be suitable for the mix of action and horror that *Predator* required.

PREDATOR is available on 3D Blu-ray from 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment



THE BEST PREDATOR QUOTES

The most memorable lines from the franchise

Predator

Blain: "This stuff will make you a God damned sexual Tyrannosaurus, just like me."

Dutch: "You're one... ugly motherfucker!"

Poncho: "You're bleeding, man. You're hit."
Blain: "I ain't got time to bleed."

Billy: "I'm scared Poncho."
Poncho: "Bullshit. You ain't afraid of no man."
Billy: "There's something out there waiting for us, and it ain't no man. We're all going to die."

Dutch: "What the hell are you?"
Predator: "What the hell are you?"

Dutch: "If it bleeds we can kill it."

Predator 2

Lieutenant Mike Harrigan: "OK pussyface, it's your move."

Gold Tooth: "King Willie says, not only do I have to kill you, but I have to take your soul. Voodoo magic. Fucking voodoo magic, man!"

Predators

Royce: "Now, let's find a way off this fucking planet."

Stans: "Wow, what a shithole. You live here?"
Noland: "Oh, no. No. This is my summer home. I winter in the Riviera. The schools are so much nicer there. And the men... Ooh, la, la! By the way, you're welcome."

Mombasa: "Wound one man. Make him suffer. Make him bleed. Make him call out for help, and set a trap and kill those who come. I know because I have done this."

With a director and star in place, it was time to secure suitable actors to portray Schwarzenegger's team of elite super soldiers. The final selection was eclectic to say the least; Carl Weathers was immediately hired to play George Dillon, Dutch's one time friend and now-CIA agent; ex-Navy Seal and wrestler Jesse Ventura played Blain Cooper; Elpidia Carrillo, a popular Mexican actress, portrayed guerrilla Anna; writer Shane Black was drafted in to play radio operator Rick Hawkins (and potentially rewrite the script), while Sonny Landham, who played tracker Billy, had originally started out in the porn industry.

Although *Predator* boasted a solid cast, it proved to be a difficult movie to make, with numerous production difficulties that required overcoming. By far the biggest issue was actually working in the Mexican jungle of Palenque with a predominantly Mexican crew, as the topography presented all sorts of issues for the inexperienced McTiernan, both from a technical and practical point of view.

"It was difficult to manoeuvre in the jungle," he reveals. "It was one of the worst nightmares I'd ever seen. We had 300 Mexican crew members, and most of them had nothing to do, and we didn't really have any way of organising them and communicating what we were trying to do. So for the first week or so there were about six of us who were making the movie.

The lack of communication was further slowed by having to deal with the Mexican union. Many of the higher-ups were lifers, having worked in the film industry since the Thirties, and proved to be set in their ways, which clearly frustrated McTiernan. The fledgling director was also having issues with the jungle itself due to its denseness and uneven ground (McTiernan broke his wrist after a fall).

"Actual very, very heavy real jungle is cinematically not very interesting, because you can't see anything," he continues. "Your horizon ends at about four feet. We would wind up going through and cutting out leaves – not doing any damage – so that you could see through at some distance."

By far the biggest problem, though, was the Predator itself. The original script required it to be an evolution of the ultimate hunter, but it was a relatively small creature, built for speed and agility in order to make it into the perfect hunting machine. Jean-Claude Van Damme was hired to portray the creature, but soon left the project, claiming the suit made him hot and uncomfortable, and that it was difficult to move in. He was also unhappy with the fact that his face wouldn't be seen, as at the time he was still making his name in Hollywood, and didn't want to be hid away under layers of latex.

"We had to go off and start shooting the movie, and were late turning out the Predator," continues McTiernan. "We were all desperately anticipating it. Finally, the day it arrived they took the crowbars, pried it open and lifted it out of the box, and we all looked at each other and thought, 'Ohhh are we in trouble.' I [filmed some shots] of the damn thing and just sent it back to the studio, saying: 'You really don't want to continue with this, do you?' They looked at it and said no."

It was a wise decision, as the one-eyed bipedal dog-like creation looked silly rather than imposing. This last point was important to McTiernan, because he couldn't make a horror film (something *Predator* turns into after its gung-ho opening third) if the antagonist didn't look like it could be a suitable match for Schwarzenegger.

With production halted, McTiernan began looking for a suitable alternative. Stan Winston was drafted into work on a new monster, while Kevin Peter Hall was hired to play the Predator. The seven-foot two-inch actor had played monsters in numerous films, including *Without Warning*, *Mazes And Monsters* and *Monster In The Closet*, and had just finished filming *Harry And The Hendersons*, where he played Bigfoot. A full foot taller than Schwarzenegger, he towered over him in the newly designed suit, ensuring that even a trained veteran like Dutch wouldn't appear to be a match for the otherworldly beast.

"When we worked with Stan Winston it was wonderful," recalls McTiernan. "Stan had done this before, he knew how to go about it, and it was a very different experience with him." The Predator design he came up with was a world away from the crude, puppet-like creature that the studio originally had, and was instantly iconic thanks to its dreadlocked hair and hideous-looking mandibles. It was actually James Cameron who played a big part in the Predator's final design, as he commented on Winston's drawing as they were travelling together by plane saying that he'd always wanted to "see a creature with mandibles". Winston duly obliged, and had drawings ready for the meeting he was flying to.

> "WE DIDN'T START WORKING ON THE SEQUEL UNTIL AFTER THE COMIC-BOOK WAS A SUCCESS"
> JIM THOMAS

As filming resumed, McTiernan's final issues were with the effects that would power *Predator*; specifically the camouflage the Predator used to blend into the surrounding jungle, and its signature heat vision. The camouflage situation was solved by dressing someone in a red body suit, getting them to move around the jungle and adding the mattes in post-production. The revolutionary heat spectrum effects proved to be a little trickier to pull off.

"When we first did the heat vision, they had a real heat vision machine from the folks in New York City," continues McTiernan. "It was an enormous thing with an umbilical cord six inches thick that we could get maybe four feet from the truck. It really would see something based on temperature, but there was this little tiny

As *Predator* progresses, you can actually see Schwarzenegger get more gaunt in his face as a direct result of an illness he suffered on set.

problem, which was their ambient temperature in Mexico was in the 90s. Consequently, people were the same temperature as the background, and they were perfectly camouflaged. In order to deal with that, the splendid folks in the special effects said, 'Well, that's no problem, we'll put ice water on the jungle and we'll have the actors stand next to a fire just before the shot', so they were literally doing that for about a week, and maybe one, maybe two shots. It was a nightmare, and it cost a fortune, so finally I went off to a video special effects house. They did commercials and things, and I sat down for about three hours – we had to do this in secret – behind the backs of the board of executives and producers."

The new effects worked, and McTiernan had his film. He'd faced numerous obstacles due to lack of communication, poor costumes and a sick leading man (during the famous log scene, Schwarzenegger was so ill he was hooked up on IV drips), but the end result was worth it. *Predator* was a cutting-edge movie that cleverly fused all-out action with true moments of horror in a sci-fi setting. Critics tore into it on its original release, calling on the flimsy plot and weak dialogue. Audiences disagreed, however, and the $18 million movie went on to make over $98 million at the box office. A sequel was assured, but as John and Jim Thomas prepared the script, they found it going through numerous rewrites due to the loss of their leading man.

"Dillllllonnnnnn"

Predator had already proven that it had life off the silver screen thanks to a series of comics published by Dark House Comics in June 1989. Additional *Predator* lore was created by numerous writers, including Mark Verheiden and Chris Warner, but the original creators were keen to expand on their own theories for a wider audience.

"We didn't start working on the sequel until after the comic-book was a success, and Joel was the one who was able to convince the studio that we should do the sequel," revealed Jim Thomas on the *Predator 2* Blu-ray. "Our first efforts were to get a script, so we worked out a storyline where Arnold would reprise his role. But when it fell out, we had to reinvent the idea of the Predator coming down and having nothing to do with the original cast, just that he liked to hunt and had been coming here for a long time."

The loss of Schwarzenegger, who had no interest in relocating the series, was a huge blow. He instead decided to sign on to another sequel, *Terminator 2*, and his character was rewritten for Gary Busey in the form of Special Agent Peter Keyes, a DEA agent tasked with capturing the Predator.

McTiernan was also off the project, and directing duties fell to Stephen Hopkins, who was previously known for the rather lamentable *A Nightmare On Elm Street 5: The Dream Child*. Danny Glover, hot off the success of the *Lethal Weapon* series, was

cast in the lead role of Lieutenant Michael Harrigan, and was ably supported by the likes of Rubén Blades, Maria Conchita Alonso and Bill Paxton.

The Thomas brothers' original script saw a second Predator return to the crater left at the end of the original film, discovering what was left of the original Predator. After viewing video footage, it targeted Dutch and headed to his home town for revenge. It's admittedly a rather silly plot, and with the absence of Schwarzenegger it had to be rewritten. The rewrite was set in the not-too-distant future, and had Glover's Harrigan facing off against numerous drug gangs and a Predator, who, attracted by the rising heat (*Predator 2* was also a metaphor for global warming) began to pick off gang leaders as well as Harrigan's team.

20th Century Fox had big plans for the sequel, giving Hopkins a budget of $35 million; almost double the $18 million of *Predator*. The end result was disappointing, however, and while *Predator 2* is not as terrible as many state – a number of genuinely decent set pieces make it worthy of your time – it fails to capitalise on its interesting setting.

While Predator 2 may not have gripped audiences in the same way as the original (it would go on to amass just $57 million), one key scene – in which Harrigan discovers the Predator's spaceship and sees a trophy cabinet with a Xenomorph skull – provided Fox with a whole new direction to move the franchise in, even though the addition of the skull from Ridley Scott's classic had appeared by simple accident.

"It gave birth to the *Alien Vs Predator comic*," reveals Jim Thomas in the same *Predator 2* commentary. "They're from two completely different time periods; Aliens are far in the future, while this is barely in the future, and it was something that we just dreamed up while we were standing around on the set seeing the trophy case and saying, 'You know? We ought to see an Alien skull in there.' Since Fox owned it, it was pretty easy to do."

The inclusion of the Xenomorph's skull and the promise of a crossover film where the two iconic monsters battled it out may have happened relatively easily, but the execution was far more difficult to pull off. It would be a further 14 years before the sci-fi marriage actually happened, and the end result wasn't what many fans were hoping for.

Many derided Paul WS Anderson's take on the series, but his vision should be given credit, even if the end product wasn't as good as the comics it had been based on. He did, after all, spend eight long years working on his vision before pitching it to Fox. The original comic-book story had been based on the planet Ryushi, a recently colonised planet that just so happens to be a hunting ground for Predators. A captive alien Queen is used to populate the planet, and the aliens soon start to attack the humans. Once the Predators arrive on the planet, they discover the settlers and change their plans. It's an interesting story that features excellent dynamics between the humans and Predators, but although it was turned into a script by Peter Briggs, it was never used, with Anderson instead using a story that took place on modern day Earth.

Charles Bishop Weyland (Lance Henriksen) organises an exploration party after discovering a strange heat source in the Antarctica. They soon discover a strange underground Pyramid, and eventually realise that Predators have been visiting

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Shane Black (Rick Hawkins) **Sonny Landham** (Billy Sole) **Arnold Schwarzenegger** (Major Alan 'Dutch' Schaefer) **Richard Chaves** (Jorge 'Poncho' Ramirez) **Carl Weathers** (George Dillon) **Bill Duke** (Mac Eliot) **and Jesse Ventura** (Blain Cooper)

ANATOMY OF A KILLING MACHINE

Your essential guide to the ultimate big game hunter

Wrist Blades
These retractable blades are either two or three-pronged, and can be anything from 12 to18 inches in length. Forged from an unknown alloy, they are virtually impervious to harm and cut effortlessly through bone.

Body Mesh
The primary function of the Predator's body mesh is to allow cloaking for any parts of the body that aren't armoured. It is also used to provide electric-generated warmth while the Predator is hunting.

Armour
This ceramic-plated armour is extremely durable, with some strains being able to withstand even alien blood. While supple enough to ensure it doesn't hamper a Predator's movement, it can also withstand immense pressure. Ceremonial armour is typically reserved for Predator leaders.

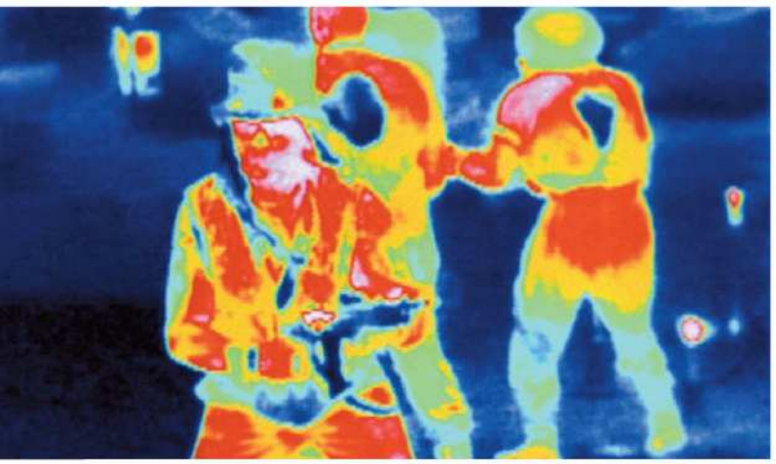
Camouflage
A Predator's biggest asset is the Yautja camouflage that it uses. Light is bent around the Predator, making it virtually invisible to the human eye, especially when not moving. It doesn't enable true invisibility, however, with a moving Predator being seen to shimmer. It's nevertheless extremely effective.

Shoulder-Mounted Plasma Cannon
This dangerous weapon is mounted on the Predator's shoulder, and is controlled by a targeting system found in the Predator's helmet. It's capable of firing plasma charges of various power, with enough strength to take down a ship if needed.

Bio Helmet
The Predator's helmet is extremely useful and incredibly versatile. It allows the Predator to breathe properly through a built-in respirator, and breathe while underwater. It contains built-in tracking for shoulder-mounted cannons, and features a special decoding device which can also record and play back any languages the alien encounters.

Medikit/Medicomp
Found on the Predator's wrist, this device has a variety of uses. In addition to doubling up as a portable medical centre, it also allows the Predator to detonate a small nuclear device if defeated.

Skulls
Predators love collecting trophies, and like to adorn themselves with their kills. They'll typically skin things and leave them hanging for others to find, or rip the skulls from bodies, often leaving the spinal cord still attached.



The original special effects were created by R/Greenberg Associates.

"WE WERE STANDING AROUND ON THE SET SEEING THE TROPHY CASE AND SAYING, 'YOU KNOW? WE OUGHT TO SEE AN ALIEN SKULL IN THERE'" JIM THOMAS

Earth for thousands of years, using willing human hosts to incubate Xenomorphs that the Predators could then hunt. Despite featuring a few memorable scenes, including a joint battle between a long-surviving Predator, his female companion (one of the few nods towards the original comic series) and an Alien Queen, the end result is rather messy, content to simply recreate its own mythology in order to deliver cheap popcorn thrills.

Despite being an obvious labour of love for Anderson, it failed to capture the excitement of the original comic series, while its final money shot, a Predalien bursting forth from a Predator's ribcage, was more silly than epic. It didn't matter to audiences, though, and while the film was critically panned, it nevertheless managed to gross over $172 million off a $60 million budget.

Due to its popularity, *Alien Vs Predator* received a sequel in 2007, which followed on directly from the first film. The fully grown Predalien attacks the Predators, causing their ship to crash in a remote Colorado forest. The Predalien and a handful of Facehuggers escape and begin infecting

CROSSOVER HELL

Thought Aliens just fought Predators? Think again, as we look at some of the best and worst comic-book crossovers to feature the iconic hunter

Mindhunter

Released: November 2000

A surprisingly good crossover, *The Darkness*' Jackie Estacado teams up with *Witchblade*'s Sara Pezzini after they find themselves imprisoned on a prison ship that's teeming with Aliens and Predators.

Aliens Versus Predator Versus The Terminator

Released: April 2000

All crossovers have an element of silliness, but this offering from writer Mark Schultz is gloriously over-the-top, and all the better for it. After getting defeated by John Connor in 2032, Skynet goes into hiding. Centuries later it begins creating Terminator/Alien hybrids, and the only person who can beat them is the clone of Ellen Ripley and Annalee Call.

Superman And Batman Versus Aliens And Predator

Released: January 2007

Another crossover from Schultz, but this offering feels too po-faced, as if DC were unwilling to let their superheroes look bad. It's another barmy plot featuring an older strain of Predators and Aliens reduced to being mindless pets. Highlights/lowlights include Superman being mistaken for a sun god, and Batman befriending the Predators.

Predator Versus Judge Dread

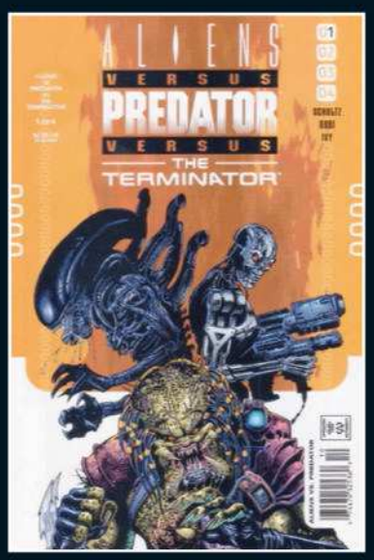
Released: October 1997

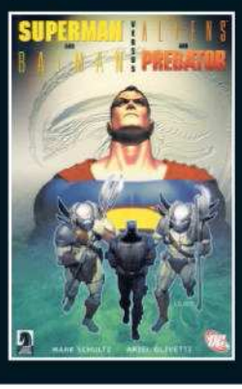
Judge Dredd creator John Wagner's interesting crossover ties in with the original *Predator* comic, as Judge Dredd's ally Psi-Judge Schaefer is a descendent of Detective Schaefer (the brother of Schwarzenegger's character). Predators visit Mega-City 1 and start hunting the law-keeping Judges, leaving Dredd with no choice but to take them down. It's a great story, further elevated by stunning imagery and lots of violence. It's arguably one of the best available crossovers, and worth a read regardless of whether you're a fan.

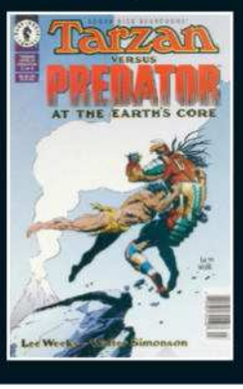
Tarzan Versus Predator: At The Earth's Core

Released: January 1996

This sounds ridiculous, but the end result is well worth tracking down. Written by Walter Simonson, it sees Predators visiting Pellucidar, the last remaining primeval forest. Unfortunately, it's guarded by Tarzan, who doesn't take kindly to his friends being hunted. It's a gripping tale, which proves that Tarzan is a match for his technologically advanced foes.







IF IT BLEEDS WE CAN KILL IT

The best moments of the Predator film franchise

Bye bye Billy

Film: *Predator*

After declaring that "there's something out there, and it ain't no man," tracker Billy makes a final defiant stand so that Dutch and what's left of his team can hopefully escape from the pursuing Predator. Standing alone on a massive log, he pulls off his top and slowly cuts his body with his huge machete. It's a wonderfully iconic scene that was copied (to less impressive effect) in *Predators*. It's all for nothing, though, as moments after leaving him, Dutch hears Billy let out a blood-curdling scream. A little later the Predator rips Billy's spine out, claiming yet another of his coveted trophies.

A real classic

Film: *Predators*

As the group start exploring the area, they stumble upon a dead Predator (a version of the classic Predator from the original movie). As soon as Nikolai (Oleg Taktarov) begins to approach it, it's clear it's not really dead, but the response from it and the resulting attack is still terrifying.

Blain Bites it

Film: *Predator*

Blain may well be a mountain of a man, carrying a modified minigun (which he calls Ol' Painless), but even he's no match for the hunting Predator. The tobacco-chewing sexual Tyrannosaurus is spooked by some rustling in the bushes, only to come face-to-face with a cute little critter. Smiling at his foolishness, he's shot by the Predator. As surprise registers on his face, a second plasma shot sends the big man to his knees as his chest explodes in spectacular fashion.

Final showdown

Film: *Predator*

After seeing his men picked off one by one, Dutch wants revenge. Smearing himself in mud to avoid the Predator's heat-seeking gaze, he sets to work making traps. He then sets a fire to attract the beast's attention, its light highlighting the invisible alien. With the Predator's camouflage suit malfunctioning, and after taking numerous wounds, the Predator removes its helmet, leaving Dutch to utter the franchise's most iconic line: "You're one ugly motherfucker."

Freezer Geezer

Film: *Predator 2*

Towards the end of *Predator 2*, the Predator is tracked down to a meat locker. Special Agent Peter Keyes (Gary Busey) leads a task force in the hope of avoiding the Predator's infrared gaze. As Harrigan watches alongside Agent Garber (Adam Baldwin) on a monitor, the Predator systematically dispatches them one by one while a panicked Garber is unable to help. Harrigan rushes off to rescue the team, but can't stop Keyes being cut in half by a flying disc.

Queen vs hunter

Film: *Alien Vs Predator*

Ever since fans saw an alien's skull in *Predator 2*, they excitedly awaited a proper onscreen scrap between the two iconic monsters. 14 years later their patience was rewarded, with Alexa Woods (Sanaa Lathan) and a lone Predator facing off against an alien Queen, with the Predator and human ultimately ending up victorious.

Guerrilla attack

Film: *Predator*

Predator has some fantastic action scenes, with the assault on a group of guerrillas being particularly memorable. Bursting into the camp, they go to town, easily dispatching their foes and showing off McTiernan's eye for action. It's a thrilling scene, but neatly highlights the fact that, despite all their strength, Dutch's men are no match for the Predator.

Freefall

Film: *Predators*

Due to its reliance on paying homage to scenes from the original, there aren't too many truly classic moments in *Predators*. Its opening scene is a real doozy, however, starting off with mercenary Royce (Adrien Brody) waking up in a totally disorientated state. It's not long before he and the viewer realises that he's plummeting through the air at a tremendous rate. After a few tense seconds he manages to launch his parachute and land, only to discover that he's not the only one to be in the same predicament.

Drugs are bad

Film: *Predator 2*

A Colombian drug lord gets killed by his Jamaican rivals after they burst into his penthouse apartment. It's not long, though, before they're attacked by the Predator. In addition to being well-choreographed, it's also an opportunity to show off the Predator's new gear, with telescopic poles, flesh-searing nets and a deadly throwing disc allow the hunter to effortlessly hunt down his prey.

Trophy Collector

Film: *Predator 2*

As Lieutenant Michael Harrigan cautiously explores the Predator's spacecraft, he stumbles on a room filled with trophies. It's an interesting menagerie, made all the more exciting by the inclusion of a Xenomorph skull. It's a pity, then, that it would be 14 years before a Predator shared screen time with an Alien, and that the final film was nowhere near as good as what one iconic moment promised.

Numerous new species were introduced in *Predators*. These included the Tracker Predator, Falconer Predator and the featured Berserker Predator. The classic Predator design from the original film is seen chained up.

"WE MADE A POINT OF TRYING TO STAY TRUE TO THE ORIGINAL, WHICH WAS A REAL JUNGLE, REAL ACTORS, AND A REAL GUY IN A SUIT" NIMRÓD ANTAL

the small town of Gunnison, while its beleaguered group of cut-out caricatures try to escape.

Like *Predator 2*, *Aliens Vs Predators: Requiem* promised much, but ultimately failed to deliver. There are plenty of nice ideas (pregnant women being used as living incubators, the army getting called in to try and stem the alien onslaught), but the execution throughout is rather limp. Directors Colin and Greg Strause may have been adept at creating gobsmacking effects (they were behind the iceberg effects in *Titanic*), but they weren't so hot when it came to dealing with characters and plot. The sequel was another success for Fox, though, and while it didn't make as much money as *Alien Vs Predator*, its eventual $128 million tally was still three times its $40 million budget.

Despite the obvious public interest in the crossover, no sequels have been announced, and fans of the series have had to make do with the rather lacklustre videogame released by Rebellion in 2010. *Predator* remained a hot property as a franchise, though, and in 2010 a third film was released, 20 years after *Predator 2*.

Robert Rodriguez had always been a huge fan of *Predator*, having written his first *Predators* script back in 1994. He'd also met Schwarzenegger about the sequel, who was adamant that the series "had to go back to the jungle". Rodriguez wasn't interested in simply revisiting the original, however, and made plans for the film to be set on the Predators' home world. He also paid no attention to the budget, as he had simply been hired to write a script.

"I wrote this script, and it was crazy," he reveals on the *Predators* DVD. "There was tonnes of stuff going on, and it was like a $200 million movie, but because I wasn't directing it I didn't have to worry. I knew they'd figure it out and cut out what they didn't want."

Rodriguez's guess was incorrect, however, and the project stalled. Filming eventually started in 2009 with a script that remained fairly faithful to Rodriguez's original idea. Made under Rodriguez's own Troublemaker Studios, *Predators* immediately began to generate interest, particularly once its cast was revealed: Adrien Brody (Royce) Topher Grace (Edwin) Alice Braga (Isabelle) and Walter Goggins (Stans) provided suitable indie credentials, Laurence Fishburne (Noland) added further clout, and Danny Trejo was hot off the back of Rodriguez's *Machete*.

Unfortunately, while the cast is strong, they're largely miscast, with Brody's gravel-throated mercenary being particularly amusing. Interestingly, Rodriguez decided against directing, leaving helming duties to Nimród Antal, who had first caught Rodriguez's attention with his 2003 comedy-thriller *Kontroll*.

"We made a very strong point of trying to stay true to the original film, which was a real jungle, real actors, and a real guy in a suit," revealed Antal in the DVD commentary. "We tried to stay true to that and be faithful to that." The end result was a little too faithful to *Predator*, and while many scenes and sequences directly mimic those from the original, they never have the same impact, making *Predators* often feel like a weak, trashy reboot. This is a shame, as the premise is a sound one.

We've not seen the last of the Thomas brothers' fearsome creation, though, as *Predators* did big business, with the $40 million budgeted film generating over $127 million. Whether future films ever match the one-off blend of genres that McTiernan's original managed remains to be seen, but as long as Fox continues to make movies based on the iconic monster, we're certain audiences will be around to watch them.

THE DIGITAL PREDATORS

There have been over 20 videogames featuring the iconic hunter since its release. Here's we cover just a handful for your pleasure

Predator

Year Released: 1987
Publisher: Activision

Everything about the first *Predator* videogame was woeful. The visuals were lousy, and the gameplay bland. The only saving grace was when the screen turned infrared, and you had to avoid the Predator's crosshairs.

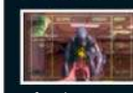
Alien Vs Predator

Year Released: 1994
Publisher: Capcom

The film spin-offs may have failed to live up to the comics, but this was a different proposition entirely. Capcom created a magnificent scrolling fighter that combined fast-paced action with beautifully animated sprites.

Alien Vs Predator

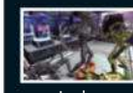
Year Released: 1994
Publisher: Atari Corporation



Alien Vs Predator was a technically incredible – for the time at least – first-person shooter that let you play as each of the three main races. It led to Rebellion making many more games based on the franchise.

Aliens Vs Predator

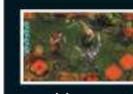
Year Released: 1999
Publisher: Fox Interactive



Excellent visuals, clever level design and a genuinely creepy atmosphere combine to create the best *AVP* game that Rebellion has created. It was re-released on Steam in 2010 to celebrate the release of another *AVP* game.

Predators

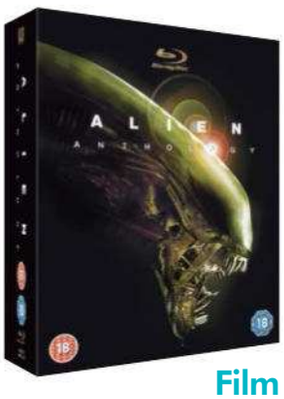
Year Released: 2010
Publisher: Chillingo



This iOS effort is fairly easy to understand, requiring you to take down wave after wave of human prey. The controls are adequate despite the touchscreen interface, so fans of the series will be pleased.

FRESH FROM CREATING ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL SCI-FI UNIVERSES OF ALL TIME IN THE TERMINATOR, DIRECTOR JAMES CAMERON CRAFTED A SEQUEL TO 1979'S MONSTER-MOVIE-IN-SPACE HORROR CLASSIC, ALIEN, SEVEN YEARS AFTER THE FACT. WE EXAMINE WHY HIS EXPANSION OF THE FRANCHISE, DESPITE BEING FAR REMOVED IN STYLE, HAD AN EQUALLY ENORMOUS IMPACT ON AUDIENCES…

ALIENS



Film

137 mins // 18 July 1986
DIRECTOR James Cameron
STORY James Cameron, Walter Hill, David Giler
SCREENPLAY James Cameron
CAST Sigourney Weaver, Carrie Henn, Michael Biehn, William Hope, Lance Henriksen, Paul Reiser, Bill Paxton

About

James Cameron's follow-up to Ridley Scott's film was greenlit by Fox after a strong performance by *The Terminator* at the US box office. In *Aliens*, the one surviving character from *Alien* (other than that stupid cat, of course), Ripley, would wake up 57 years in the future only to discover that the creatures that killed her entire crew had supposedly caused radio silence at a nearby human colony. To help curb the nightmares she has about the creature, she mounts up and joins an ill-fated military expedition to see what happened at Hadley's Hope.

***Aliens* is the ultimate action movie.** The formula to a great product in this genre is sometimes perceived as having the most action, in regards to set pieces, explosions and other hyperactive staples, but it's really about those subtler elements that are often overlooked by filmmakers. Tension, foreshadowing and confounding expectations are equally important components; although *Aliens* is undeniably packed with action, it's the moments surrounding these scenes that validate the movie and give it such impact.

James Cameron's follow-up to the 1979 Ridley Scott-directed hit maintained some of its predecessor's horror elements. The title was telling – *Aliens*, rather than the more logical title of *Alien 2*, was a very obvious declaration of intent in how far removed from the original it would be, at least in terms of the escalating threat level. The single alien from the first movie would be elaborated into an omnipresent force – Cameron would build on *Alien*'s ideas rather than replicate them. This turned what was just a great monster movie into a full-blown franchise with its own mythology.

In a 1986 interview with Canadian news show *Midday*, Cameron discussed why he thought a sequel to *Alien* was worth pursuing. "I was very enthusiastic. I've never conducted myself under that preconception of sequels. Basically, anything is possible. I think most sequels are made to cash in on the first picture and use its success to launch another film regardless of the quality of the second film. Our attraction to doing this picture six or seven years after the fact – which is well beyond the normal time window for a sequel, in any event – was to do something special and to do something different, and to use Ridley Scott's *Alien* as a platform we can jump off from and go that much further. In other words, to almost use it as a first act of a very epic story. And in that respect we tried to turn it around so the fact it's a sequel is a plus rather than a minus."

After the success of *The Terminator*, Cameron was given the green light by Fox to make a sequel to *Alien*. Having scripted it while making the Arnold Schwarzenegger-starring flick, the director shot the movie over a ten-month period with a budget that only slightly exceeded its predecessor when seven years of inflation are taken into account ($18.5 million versus *Alien*'s $11 million). After some initial resistance from the studio in matching her wage demands, Sigourney Weaver reprised the role of Ripley, the only returning character from the original outing.

It's well documented that *Aliens* is a Vietnam allegory. The idea that these well-equipped and trained Colonial Marines, convinced of victory, come completely unstuck in the face of antagonists that are tactically superior was an obvious and effective parallel. The omnipresent Weyland-Yutani company was there to reflect corporate arms sales motives in the Vietnam War, forging a successful metaphor that helped elevate it above the more literal action crop.

Of course, that has little to do with the movie's actual quality. *Aliens* works because it's a daring rethink of the original *Alien* conceit; Cameron cleverly played with the imagery that legendarily shocked audiences upon *Alien*'s release (urban legends about people running screaming out of the theatre ensured the movie had a permanent place in the horror pantheon), revisiting the chestburster scene in Ripley's dream sequence early on in the running time to connect the dots between the two pictures.

Jumping forward 57 years from the end of the first movie, Cameron's intent with *Aliens* was to expand the mythology with Ripley at the centre of it. To do this, the character was properly fleshed out in the first third of the movie – we learn more about her back story, including her deceased daughter (in the Special Edition), her lasting trauma from her experience with the xenomorph on the Nostromo and her motives for returning to LV-426. In *Alien*, the audience only saw Ripley as the one sensible survivor on a ship operated by fools – she was a touchstone between the viewer and the action, but that was all she had to be.

Cameron capitalises on that in several ways. First of all, the time jump was an incredibly smart storytelling device – it

"WE WANTED TO USE ALIEN AS A PLATFORM WE COULD JUMP OFF FROM… AS A FIRST ACT OF A VERY EPIC STORY"
– JAMES CAMERON

ALIENS' HIGHLIGHTS

Because the five-finger fillet sequence isn't as good as you think it is

THE AUDIENCE SCREW

Oh no! Ripley had a xeno inside her the whole time! Hang on, we were supposed to think that. We're deceived into thinking Ripley's in for the same fate as John Hurt's Kane in Alien, but really, it's just an effective means of familiarising the audience with the creature's reproductive cycle before the madness can ensue.

T IN ONE EARLY VERSION OF THE SCRIPT, RIPLEY FINDS BURKE COCOONED AND CHOOSES TO LEAVE HIM WITH A LIVE GRENADE.

GAME OVER, MAN!

A xeno snuck on board the dropship and killed the pilot, meaning that the group on LV-426 is stranded until they can find another way off the planet. It's at this moment that we realise how completely screwed the Colonial Marines are at the mercy of these creatures.

T THE OPENING OF FIREFLY'S 'SERENITY, PART 1 IS CLEARLY A HOMAGE TO THIS SEQUENCE.

"THAT CAN'T BE. THAT'S INSIDE THE ROOM!"

This amazing and effective sequence may well be the best scene in the movie, as the marines barricade themselves inside the medical bay while the aliens amass outside. As the motion tracker detects a crazy amount of enemies, the marines realise – too late – that they're coming in through the walls!

T THE PULSE RIFLES IN THE MOVIE ARE IN FACT RETROFITTED THOMPSON MACHINE GUNS WITH SHOTGUN ATTACHMENTS.

THE ESCAPE

Ripley bravely ventures into the human colony with the APC, where the marines are trapped in the alien nest – after recovering who she can, Ripley races the vehicle out of harm's way, running over a wayward xenomorph as they venture outside the terraforming colony.

T FILMED IN A DECOMMISSIONED COAL PLANT IN LONDON, THE APC HAD TO BE STRIPPED DOWN SO IT WASN'T TOO HEAVY FOR THE FLOORING.

"NOT BAD FOR A HUMAN"

Ripley gets into the exosuit cargo loader, and, despite it being touch-and-go for a moment, she manages to dump the alien queen out of the airlock after a little bit of a tussle. It's probably the most ridiculous scene in the entire movie, but also the coolest, as we get to see the protagonist at her most determined here.

T THE QUEEN HAD TO BE OPERATED BY A TEAM OF UP TO 16 PUPPETEERS DURING PRODUCTION WHEN IT WAS IN FULL MOVEMENT.

Aliens wasn't a cash-in sequel; it took on a life of its own.

allowed Weyland-Yutani to be weaved into the narrative, a secondary antagonist for Ripley that constantly calls into question her judgement and later puts all human life at risk. So much is added into the film by having the walls closing in on the characters, as it were, to portray two very different types of enemy: one, a very clearly identified evil and primal force, and the other, a seemingly benevolent scientific entity that sees its own employees as expendable. Both come to be an overbearing menace throughout the film.

Such a dynamic makes Ripley an altogether more significant part of the story. To ensure Ripley wasn't just the survivor of the group, this time, Cameron fleshed out her back story, gave her the name 'Ellen' and had her confront – rather than flee – the alien enemy. Ellen Ripley is a three-dimensional feminine powerhouse. The character's connection with the orphan Newt (the mildly irritating Carrie Henn) and Corporal Hicks (Cameron mainstay Michael Biehn) enriched the protagonist further. The combination of these deeper motivations and Sigourney Weaver's talents earned the actress an Academy Award nomination for Best Actress.

Weaver discussed why she returned to the role in an interview to promote the movie. "I think she's really a haunted person and this is a catharsis for her, going back and finishing an episode that started half a century ago. And that's what made me want to do a sequel. I wanted to get back inside her again and see what had happened to her."

But what of the crew of the Sulaco? A diverse bunch, played by Cameron favourites like Bill Paxton, Lance Henriksen and the aforementioned Biehn as well as relative unknowns, the initially confident group of meatheads is soon overwhelmed by the alien threat when they realise they've nested in a delicate part of the colony, one where the marines can't resort to their most deadly methods of firepower. From there, they're picked

"ALIENS GAVE CINEMAGOERS A TERRORISING THRILL RIDE… IT MAY HAVE BEEN LOUD, BUT IT HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH SMARTS ON AND OFF SCREEN TO BACK IT UP"

THE DOOMED FEW

Our favourites of the USS Sulaco bunch

HUDSON (Bill Paxton)

How many of you thought, "I can't wait for that Hudson idiot to get it"? He's the archetypal tough guy who turns out to be a wuss, but is a brilliant narrative device – his vocalised fear carries over to the viewer, conflicting against the quiet tension.

T MOST OF THE MARINES' FIRST NAMES COME FROM THE ACTORS THEMSELVES – HUDSON'S FIRST NAME, WILLIAM, WAS TAKEN FROM PAXTON.

HICKS (Michael Biehn)

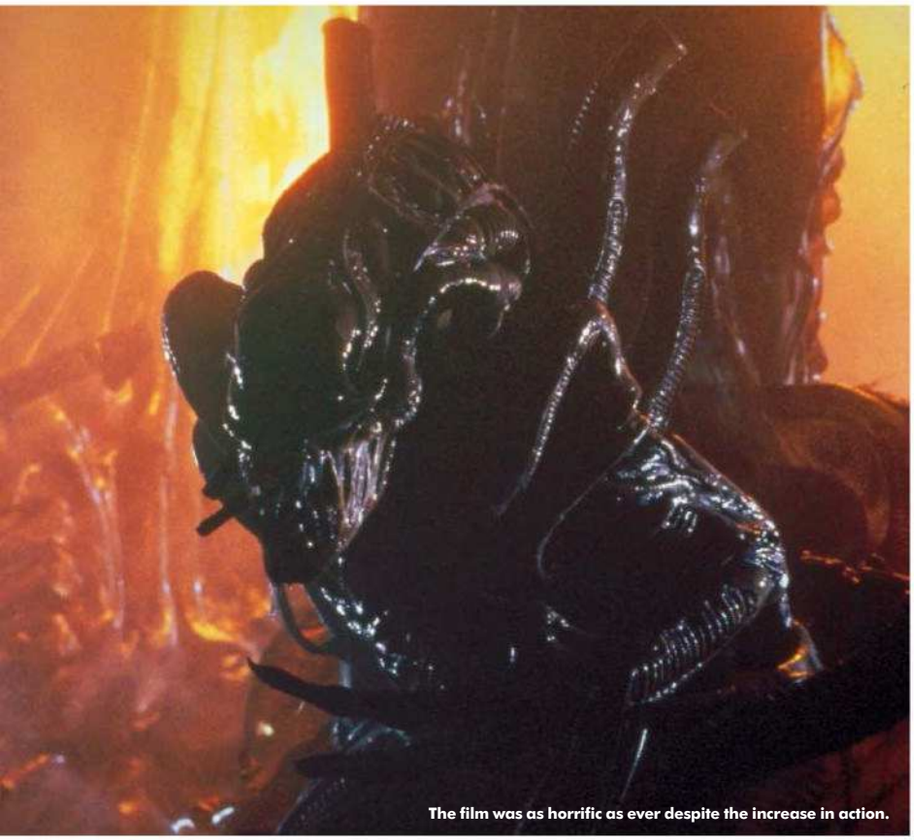
Let's face it, of all the marines in the group, Hicks is the only one worth rooting for, since he doesn't spend the entire movie behaving like a total buffoon, as everyone else does. Still, the fact that he's so sickeningly nice to Ripley probably got on somebody's tits.

T ONLY HICKS'S LIKENESS APPEARS IN ALIEN 3 AFTER THE CHARACTER WAS KILLED OFF. BIEHN REPORTEDLY GOT A LOT OF MONEY FOR HIS 'ROLE'.

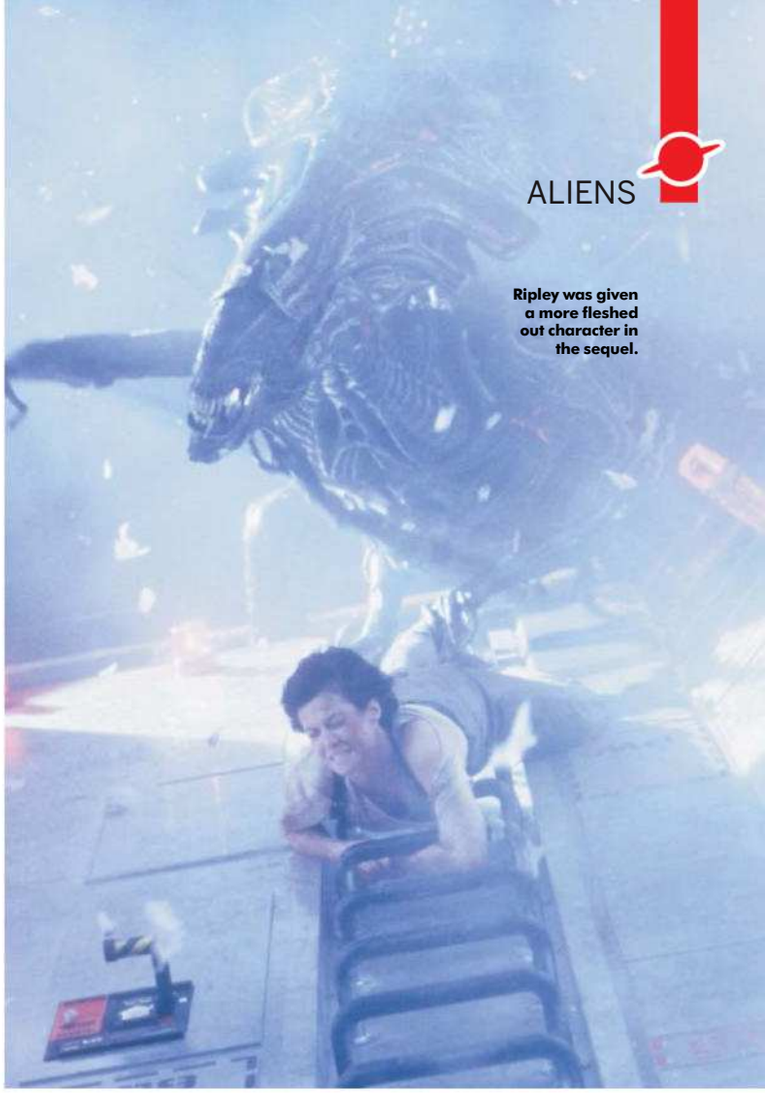
VASQUEZ (Jenette Goldstein)

Every unit has a 'tough girl', right? If Vasquez had been created in 2010, we bet Michelle Rodriguez would've played her. Still, Vasquez proved to be worth keeping around, since she sacrificed herself when the xenos started pouring through the walls.

T GOLDSTEIN HAD NO EXPERIENCE WITH FIREARMS, SO THE PRODUCER HAD TO DOUBLE IN THE SCENE WHERE VASQUEZ SHOOTS THE XENO.



The film was as horrific as ever despite the increase in action.



Ripley was given a more fleshed out character in the sequel.

off, one-by-one, save for the handsome and not-a-total-asshole Hicks. This set of characters gave Cameron a strong basis to construct the movie's many action sequences – but again, it all related back to Ripley and the idea that this was her story, her revenge.

Cameron took the promise of action, itself a draw for the audience, and framed it with a basic but necessary human drama. "It's about personal bonding under pressure," he explained in a 1986 promotional interview. "I have to relate to it as the story of the people, and it's about people in a situation and how they react, the extremes of emotion. The cowardice, the bravery… the things you didn't expect, the things you didn't know you could do and committing to another person when it could mean your life." Through Ripley, Newt, Burke and the marines, we're shown a much broader set of reactions to this terrifying force.

To some extent, it can be argued that *Aliens*' focus on action paved the way for the ensuing trash like the dodgy *Alien 3* and the diabolical *Aliens Vs Predator – Requiem*, but that's not Cameron's fault – it's a misinterpretation of the director's ambitions in *Aliens*, by those who assume the action in the movie is the point and not the space in between these sequences. *Aliens* gave cinemagoers a terrorising thrill ride with near-unbearable levels of tension, an exercise that proves an action-oriented story needs as much finesse and balanced decision-making as that of any other genre. Cameron's extension of the franchise may have been loud, but it had more than enough smarts on and off screen to back it up.

The **ALIEN ANTHOLOGY** boxset is available on Blu-ray from 20th Century Fox

BURKE (Paul Reiser)

Burke is the human embodiment of Weyland-Yutani, a sneaky bastard who sees the value of researching the alien species as a greater priority than the lives of anyone else on the Sulaco. He's also slain when the aliens come out of the ceiling towards the end.

BURKE WASN'T IN THE ORIGINAL TREATMENT OF THE MOVIE, WITH A CHARACTER CALLED DR O'NEILL GIVEN SOME OF THE CHARACTER'S LINES.

BISHOP (Lance Henriksen)

Okay, so he's not technically a marine, but the android Bishop hangs around in the same crowd. After earning Ripley's respect, Bishop is sadly speared by the queen just as they're about to make their escape with Newt in tow. At least he didn't feel anything.

BISHOP RETURNS IN ALIEN 3, WHERE WE MEET THE MAN WHO CLAIMS TO BE HIS DESIGNER. WHAT A LOAD OF OLD GARBAGE.

CLEAN AS A WHISTLE

For the movie's release on Blu-ray as part of the *Alien Anthology*, James Cameron remastered *Aliens*, working with the same colourist he collaborated with on *Avatar*. Remarkably, all the noise and grain of the movie has been completely ironed out for its high-def release. Cameron had this to say about it in an interview with Comingsoon.net. "It's spectacular. We went in and completely de-noised it, de-grained it, up-rezzed, colour-corrected every frame, and it looks amazing. It looks better that it looked in the theatres originally. Because it was shot on a high-speed negative that was a new negative that didn't pan out too well and got replaced the following year. So it's pretty grainy. We got rid of all the grain. It's sharper and clearer and more beautiful than it's ever looked." This process was applied to the longer, special edition of the movie – we wish it was being re-released in theatres so we could experience this definitive version of the movie on the big screen.

Why is Aliens a Modern Classic?

1. James Horner's score
Although Horner apparently had to borrow parts from his scores to *Star Trek II* and *III*, the composer's work on *Aliens* garnered him an Academy Award, so vital is the soundtrack to maintaining the movie's tension.

2. Action and only action
Aliens proves that an action movie doesn't have to be stupid; its well-constructed storyline demonstrates how important pacing is to this genre. How come so few directors can do it?

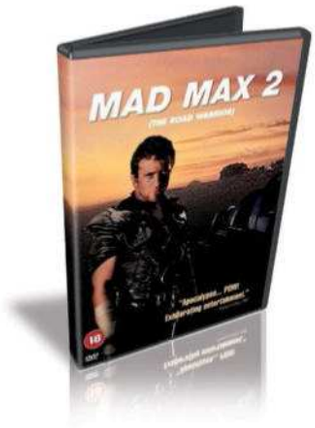
3. Reinventing the sequel
Who said a sequel had to be a rehash? Cameron certainly references *Alien* in his picture, yet it's his own touches that define the movie – it's set in the same universe all right, but everything else is totally different.

4. Allegorical
Vietnam War movie in space, blah blah. You've heard it before, but yes, the fact that the conflict between the marines and their more skilled enemy relates to a historical event adds a layer of resonance it would otherwise be without.

5. Sigourney Weaver
If there's one noticeable difference between *Alien* and its sequel, it's the superior performance from Weaver. In *Alien*, Ripley was just a smart victim, but here the actress is challenged to bring out deeper aspects of the character.

"I REMEMBER A TIME OF CHAOS, RUINED DREAMS, THIS WASTED LAND, BUT MOST OF ALL, I REMEMBER THE ROAD WARRIOR, THE MAN WE CALLED MAX"

MAD MAX 2: THE ROAD WARRIOR



Film

91 mins // 1981
DIRECTOR George Miller
CAST Mel Gibson, Michael Preston, Bruce Spence, Vernon Wells, Virginia Hey

About

George Miller's *The Road Warrior*, or *Mad Max 2*, was the sequel to Miller's 1979 low budget sci-fi flick *Mad Max*. Starring the then unknown Aussie actor Mel Gibson, *The Road Warrior* became a smash at the US box office, launching the career of Gibson Set in a post-nuclear apocalypse where petrol is the only currency left, its vision of the future resonated with audiences at the start of the Eighties, and is even more prophetic now for our increasingly-oil dependent times. However, it was the film's striking production design and its now-legendary action scenes which have secured its position in apocalyptic-fiction history.

"If it's all the same to you, I'll drive that tanker," Mel Gibson's Max growls as George Miller's sequel gears up for its relentless finale. The leader of the settlers Pappagallo, though, is not convinced. "The offer is closed. It's too late for deals," he sternly fires back, even though Lord Humungus, Wez and the rest of their leather-clad crazies are lining up outside the compound walls. But Max isn't looking to bargain a way to save his own hide. "No deals," he states with a mad-eyed matter of factness. "I want to drive that truck!" Moments later he's hauled himself up into the cabin, the settlers open the gate to the compound and he drives the tanker out through the baying throng and careers off towards the highway, inadvertently steering himself, and *The Road Warrior*, into the pantheons of sci-fi, and action, cinema history.

Mad Max 2 – released in the States as *The Road Warrior* in order to avoid confusion, as the original movie only received a limited release there – takes its place as a sci-fi classic for many reasons. There's its relentless brutality, its pitch perfect vision of a post-nuclear dystopia, its unparalleled action scenes (we're talking about *that* climactic chase), not to mention a career-making turn from Mel Gibson. What surprises the most about this, though, is that back in 1981, no one would have believed you if you told them that more than a quarter of a century later, people would be hailing director George Miller's turbo-charged outback sci-fi flick as one of the definitive action movies cinema has ever produced. Sequels are, as the old adage goes, rarely as good as their originals. 1979's *Mad Max* was a no-budget affair; a cult fave for sure (just ask *True Romance*'s Clarence Worley for confirmation) but it was hardly challenging for any 'top action scene' accolades. This just makes *Mad Max 2*'s achievements all the more impressive in that it's not only a sequel that tops its predecessor, but also that the action movie rule book was rewritten not by the cash-spilling studios of Hollywood, but rather by a visionary Australian director intent on committing his own unique vision to screen.

Set in the 'near future', the world has been obliterated by the US and USSR's reckless use of nuclear weapons, leaving in their wake a post-apocalyptic world of frightening brutality. Max exists on the fringes of this world: a former highway enforcer whose family have been murdered by the crazed biker gangs that roam the country, he's a loner, a nihilist, a violently unhinged individual. A chance encounter with another outback scavenger, though, leads him to a group of settlers who have fortified a compound around an oil refinery. Along with food, oil is one of the only currencies left in the world, which means it comes as no surprise that the wasteland's barbaric marauders – led by the fearsome Lord Humungus, a hockey mask-wearing brute of a man – want the refinery for themselves. With this standoff in place, the settlers' salvation comes in the form of the most unlikely of heroes.

The Road Warrior's story itself is minimal to say the least. Taking place almost solely around the settlers' compound and their attempts to defend it against the marauders, the film draws on many a western theme in its setup: there's the stranger who arrives at a small town, in this case the compound, who sides with the locals against the dangers outside, in this case the marauders who step in for the absent Indians. Director and co-writer Miller's characterisation is resolutely functional, the film's inhabitants presented as almost cartoonish caricatures, their motives and back stories limited in focus. But to bemoan what could be perceived as the film's one-dimensionality would be to entirely miss the point. *The Road Warrior* is a film that lives and breathes within its own world, and which abides by its own rules – it's a pure form of cinematic entertainment.

From the very beginning, Miller envisaged the film as one that would be told through its images – Max himself has but a mere 17 lines throughout the film – and it is these images which fuel the film, functioning not only as its bread and butter, but as its singular raison d'être. The ravaged and barren wastelands have become almost the cinematic template for future film depictions of a post-apocalyptic world, and Wez and his biker gang's unique style has stepped out from under its cult movie origins and into popular

"AN ACTION PIC UNLIKE ANY OTHER, ROAD WARRIOR REFUSED TO PLAY BY THE RULES"

The leader of the vicious marauders, Lord Humungus.

The Road Warrior influenced a generation of sci-fi to come.

The Mad Max series introduced Mel Gibson to Hollywood and brought him international acclaim.

The movie's brutal and carnage-strewn climactic chase sequence is a landmark in action cinema history.

MOMENTS OF MADNESS

SciFiNow looks at The Road Warrior's maddest, and most memorable, moments

APOCALYPSE NOW

"The world has crumbled… the cities have exploded… in a whirlwind of looting and a firestorm of fear…" The opening voiceover by the yet to be revealed feral kid sets the scene for the anarchy that is to come and it paints a perfect picture of a society that has collapsed.

The nuclear apocalypse was never explained in the first instalment, *Mad Max*.

PRECIOUS JUICE

As the loner who roams the wastelands, Mel Gibson's former highway patrol officer Max runs into Wez and his horde of deranged and bloodthirsty biker crazies. Vastly outnumbered and outmuscled, he uses his wits to get the better of them, making off with their 'precious juice' in the process.

Max's jacket sleeve is cut off to remain consistent with the events of the first movie.

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

Scavenging the barren wasteland, Max stumbles across an abandoned gyro-copter, only the propeller-driven diamond in the rough is actually a trap set by the copter's pilot, the Gyro Captain. Aided by a shell-less shotgun, Max outwits the pilot who then blubs about the oil refinery in exchange for Max sparing his life.

Two gyrocopters were used while filming – the dummy was destroyed in the 'gyro-crash' scene.

HUMUNGUS ARRIVES

Lord Humungus (Kjell Nilsson), the leader of this particular band of outback marauders, is a terrifying presence in the film, nowhere more so than in his arrival, where he calmly beseeches the settlers to give up their oil refinery haven to him and his baying mob of rapists, murderers and cannibalistically-inclined nutcases.

Jason Voorhees continued the hockey masked-murderer style in 1982's *Friday 13th Part 3*.

"I WANT TO DRIVE THE TRUCK!"

"Look at yourself, you couldn't drive a wheelchair!" Zetta understatedly observes of Max's physical wellbeing, but this doesn't stop him steamrollering the truck out of the compound and onto the highway with Wez, Humungus and his gang of ghouls in hot pursuit. Cue vehicular carnage of the highest order.

The explosion that destroys the compound was the largest to be attempted in Australian cinema.

culture, referenced in everything from *The Simpsons* and *South Park* to countless music videos and videogames. Costume designer Norma Moriceau's creations for the mohawked and punk-infused biker gang, as well as Max's now iconic leather-dependent get-up, define the film just as much as its bravura action sequences, but despite all this emphasis on style and impact, though, the film is not without substance.

While its tale of a oil-dependent future strikes a chord just as much, if not more so, today, back at the start of the decade that taste forgot, it was all-too familiar a worry for audiences whose real lives were feeling the effects of the global fears over oil scarcity. For instance, the '7 Sisters Oil', which is written down the side of the tanker, is a direct reference to the seven oil companies that conspiracy theorists of the time accused of manipulating and controlling oil prices. The increase in crime, too, throughout the Seventies, particularly in Australian conurbations, lent the film a resonance with native audiences. However, if *The Road Warrior* is known for one thing, and one thing only, it would be for its genre-shaping action.

The most expensive Australian film of its day, *The Road Warrior* upped the ante for action movies, and set a new precedent for subsequent filmmakers to live up to. The settlers' compound, which was constructed in Brokenhill, New South Wales, was the largest set ever built in Australia and so it comes as no surprise that the booby-trapped explosion that blows it up, and kicks off the film's climax, was the largest ever attempted in Australian film. This sense of scale was carried through to what could only be described as its logical conclusion, with stunt-coordinator Max Aspin and Miller collaborating on the film's climactic chase to produce one of the defining sequences in action cinema, and one which has remained unsurpassed to this day, despite the blossoming budgets of the CGI-aided tentpole productions studios dish out year after year. Involving motorbikes, sports cars, buggies and what can only be described as a jet-engine strapped on wheels, in its orchestration of a simply staggering amount of vehicular carnage, the climactic chase sequence is the moment to which the film has been building since the opening frames of Max and his V8 Interceptor tearing along the abandoned highways. With the camera racing along at ludicrous speeds, the lens skimming the dirt of the road, Miller's dedication to capturing a truly pulsating spectacle was such that the director decided to keep in the final film, for authenticity purposes of course, a genuine accident that a stunt rider incurred during the filming. When Max rams one of his bike-riding pursuers off the road, the stuntman was supposed to fly over the top of a crashed roadside wreck. However, the stuntman in question fluffed his timing and wound up clattering

"THE ROAD WARRIOR UPPED THE ANTE FOR ACTION MOVIES AND SET A PRECEDENT FOR FILMMAKERS"

THE NEAR FUTURE...

...and what it held in store for the cast of The Road Warrior

MEL GIBSON (Max)

The Road Warrior was only Mel Gibson's third feature but it thrust him into the Hollywood limelight. Peter Weir's *Gallipoli* cemented his acting kudos before *Lethal Weapon* took him stellar. Best Director and Best Picture Oscars for *Braveheart* followed and Gibson now spends his time directing blood-soaked pics such as *The Passion Of The Christ* and attending the odd Al-Anon meeting.

THE ROAD WARRIOR TRAILERS DID NOT FEATURE GIBSON, INSTEAD FOCUSING ON THE ACTION.

BRUCE SPENCE (The Gyro Captain)

A character actor who crops up in the unlikeliest of places, Spence returned for *Thunderdome* duty and has since developed an eclectic CV that takes in Alex Proyas's *Dark City*, doomed Anne Rice adaptation *Queen Of The Damned* and *Finding Nemo*. He has also managed to land himself in three of the biggest franchises of recent times: *The Matrix*, *The Lord Of The Rings*, and *Star Wars*.

BRUCE WAS NOMINATED FOR A BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR SATURN AWARD FOR *THE ROAD WARRIOR*.

MICHAEL PRESTON (Pappagallo)

Before life as the settlers' leader came a calling, Preston had been a jobbing actor for 14 years, including a 42 episode stint on US series *Homicide*. Post-*Max*, he has been a regular to TV movie fare, as well as popping up in shows such as *The A-Team*, *Airwolf*, *Alien Nation*, and *Highlander*. His career, sadly, has tailed off in recent years resigning Preston to the 'where are they now' file.

PRESTON IS A FORMER MEMBER OF THE FLYING KARAMAZOV BROTHERS JUGGLING TROUPE.

The feral kid: outback resident and boomerang handler extraordinaire.

Those post-nuclear apocalypse fashions in all their glory.

Thunderous set pieces abound as the settlers battle the marauders.

into said vehicle with his knees, resulting in a rather acrobatic flip through the air. While the shot is admittedly eye-catching, the hapless rider's limbs demonstrate (a particularly wince-inducing and unnatural looking bend can be seen at the rider's knee if the film is viewed in slo-mo) the dangers the shooting of the legendary sequence involved.

The film wears its B-movie credentials on its sleeve, but in the hands of Miller it became so much more, the aforementioned chase just one of many flashes of ambition and inspiration, not to mention artistic merit. While the production and costume design earned the film plaudits and have ensured both its legacy and continued influence upon cinema, the film is injected with a sense of aural and visual grandeur, most notably in the form of Brian May's operatic score and the heavily stylised montage scene depicting Humungus and his hordes on the horizon. Underneath this oft overlooked artistic merit, Miller even finds room for a touch of humour amidst all the on-screen barbarity, as evidenced by the numerous swipe edits, as made famous by Lucas and his Tatooine-based *Star Wars*.

Miller has since gone off and pursued a career of quite dazzling diversity – he can count drama *Lorenzo's Oil*, the dark comedy *The Witches Of Eastwick* and *Happy Feet* among his credits – and Gibson has gone from being an unknown to a Hollywood megastar, to a celebrated, if controversial, director. *Mad Max*, though, both franchise and character, remains for both of them the work with which they are most readily associated. The series starter in 1979 may be the more human of the three movies, with 1985's *Thunderdome* taking the Max saga to its camp conclusion (we assumed), but *The Road Warrior* is undoubtedly the trilogy's pinnacle. It's an adrenaline-charged action pic unlike any other; it refused to play by the rules back at the start of the Eighties. Almost 30 years later, the daring attitude and vision of the filmmakers that birthed it has stood it in pretty good stead and it has returned to us in the form of the epic *Mad Max: Fury Road*.

The **MAD MAX TRILOGY** boxset is available on Blu-ray from Warner Brothers Studios

VERNON WELLS (Wez)

Wells followed in the footsteps of fellow *Road Warrior* alumni Preston with an appearance on Aussie drama *Homicide* in 1975. He suffered slightly from being typecast after *The Road Warrior*, though, which can only explain his appearance in 1994's *Dickwad* as the 'Biker From Hell'. He will, however, forever be known as Bennett whom Arnie instructed to 'let off steam' in 1985's *Commando*.

WELLS PLAYED THE BIKE RIDING MANIAC LORD GENERAL IN WEIRD SCIENCE.

VIRGINIA HEY (The Warrior Woman)

After *Max*, Hey endured the rights of passage that almost all Australian actors are obliged to undertake and appeared in both *Neighbours* and *Prisoner Cell Block H*, *Home And Away* being the only Aussie mainstay to have escaped her. Sporadic TV work followed during the 90s before Hey hit pay dirt as Pa'u Zotoh Zhaan in *Farscape*, for which she completed 50 episodes.

HEY WAS NOMINATED AS BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS SATURN AWARD FOR FARSCAPE.

FURY ROAD

The fourth outing for 'Mad' Max Rockatansky, titled mad *Max: Fury Road*, nearly came to fruition in 2003 with Mel Gibson "all but signed to play the lead," according to Miller. The movie fell through but director Miller later announced his commitment to bringing the character back to the big screen. "I want to do another *Mad Max* movie," Miller told the AAP (Australian Associated Press) but he told fans not to hold their breath for Gibson's return. "It won't be Mel," Miller attested. "He was 21 when he made the first one, now he's a lot older and his passion is for filmmaking and directing." News as to who may be stepping into Max's well-worn boots remained scarce until the announcement of Tom Hardy's casting. Miller's enthusiasm for the film and the series means that *Thunderdome* isn't Max's last outing. Thankfully.

Why is Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior a modern sci-fi classic?

1. Car chase heaven
Just in case it had escaped your notice, *Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior* has one of the greatest four-wheeled pursuits ever committed to celluloid (eat your heart out *French Connection*!). Brutal, ruthless and utterly relentless, it is jaw-dropping action cinema at its absolute purest.

2. Mel Gibson
At the start of the Eighties, Gibson was unheard of in Hollywood (he had even been dubbed for the first movie's US release so his accent didn't confuse audiences). *The Road Warrior*, though, was his breakthrough role Stateside and by the end of the decade he was a star. It's a shame he ruined it all by making *What Women Want* and then blabbing about Jews being responsible for everything wrong in the world.

3. Biker Baddies
Mad Max introduced the meanest biker gangs to science fiction, subverting the leather-clad cool of *The Wild One* for the hellish nightmare of the nuked-out Aussie outback.

4. Recurring nightmares
Presenting a nuclear-ravaged world scarred by remnants from a world long-since departed, *The Road Warrior*'s rusting dystopia has become as much a sci-fi benchmark for further generations of filmmakers as Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*.

5. The Interceptor
Max's mode of transport of choice, the Pursuit Special, was reacquired during pre-production for the sequel and the re-tooled 1973 Ford Falcon XB GT coupe has since become a thing of legend. The car used for shooting was rescued from the scrapheap and now resides in the Cars Of The Stars Motor Museum in Keswick, Cumbria.

THE TERMINATOR is available on Blu-ray from 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment priced £11.09.

THE HISTORY OF THE TERMINATOR

BIRTHED BY A FEVERED DREAM, THE TERMINATOR HAS GIVEN US JAMES CAMERON, ARNIE, AND SOME OF THE FINEST SCI-FI FILMS OF ALL TIME. HERE WE TAKE A LOOK BACK AT HOW SKYNET WAS BORN, AND HOW HUMANITY WAS, HOPEFULLY, SAVED...

If you had said back at the start of the Eighties that a low-budget sci-fi actioner starring an Austrian body builder would be deemed by the Library of Congress's National Film Registry as "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant," you'd have found yourself locked up in Pescadero State faster than you could say "I'll be back". Yet with James Cameron's *The Terminator* that's exactly what happened. As well as finding itself selected for preservation, the film made the career of former Governor of California Mr Arnold Schwarzenegger, launched James Cameron's pioneering assault on the film industry, culminating in 2009's boundary-pushing 3D *Avatar* mega hit, as well as birthing one of the most beloved sci-fi franchises in cine-history, reaching through four films and a television show as well as a vast array of comic-books, videogames and tie-in paraphernalia.

Birthed from a fevered dream James Cameron had while stricken ill in Rome, the idea for *The Terminator* was simple and direct. "I've been fascinated ever since by our human propensity for dancing on the edge of the apocalypse. So when I wrote the first *Terminator* outline around 1982, I was just working out my childhood stuff," said Cameron, in a 2009 article that he wrote for *Wired*. "It was also born out of the science fiction movies and literature I grew up with. For the most part, they were warnings – about technology, about science, about the military and the government. You couldn't escape those themes or the fear of nuclear holocaust." Aiming for a definitive robot film, Cameron didn't come up short, his time-travelling apocalyptic tale of man versus machines instantly taking on the mantle that Cameron had, quite ambitiously too, set for himself. But the shape the film would take, and the iconic characters it produced, could have been vastly different.

Originally the Terminator was conceived as small and anonymous, the sort of appearance that would blend into a crowd, the exact opposite to the hulking man-mountain that Schwarzenegger would bring to the production. In fact, originally he was slated to take on the role of Kyle Reese, the human warrior from the future sent back to protect Sarah Connor, and Lance Henriksen was to play the time-travelling cyborg, to the point that Henriksen arrived for a read-through in full Terminator make-up, baffling and terrifying in equal measure those at the studio unaware of the role he was going for. Schwarzenegger, though, had a different idea for the role he wanted to play.

After a meeting with Cameron, at which both were still working along the lines of their original casting intent, the realisation that Schwarzenegger would be better quickly came to the forefront, Cameron's mocked-up artwork with his Austrian star-to-be as the titular character convincing the suits. Michael Biehn snagged the role of Reese himself. Biehn initially impressed at his audition, but nearly missed out on the part as a Southern accent he had been carrying – the morning before meeting Cameron he had auditioned for *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* and hadn't managed to shake the adopted accent before his afternoon appointment – sat at odds with the soldier character Cameron envisaged.

Cameron and producing partner Gale Anne Hurd were both Roger Corman alumni and their shared experiences of working with the (in)famous filmmaker would shape the way in which they approached making *The Terminator*. It's fair to say that the shoot was anything but a walk in the park, a theme that would come to dominate Cameron's on set reputation in the years to follow.

Shooting at night was tough on the cast and crew, and wore the patience down of the film's executive producer, who reportedly begged Cameron to shoot a few daytime scenes due to the perceived difference in cost. Cameron resisted vociferously for stylistic reasons. In fact, the film and its nocturnal setting, were typified by the naming of the nightclub in the film in which the Terminator finds the right

CHASING THE TERMINATOR

The five finest chase sequences from the franchise

MOTORBIKE VS KYLE REESE
(The Terminator)

1 Kyle and Sarah, after being alerted by a dog's barking, hightail it in a rusty old van with Arnie's leather jacket-clad T-800 in motorbike-pursuit. Sarah's driving, and Kyle's responsible for trying to stop the unstoppable with a collection of homemade grenades.

Finest moment?
A tanker explosion, caused by one of Kyle's grenades, rips the flesh from Arnie's exoskeleton, revealing the silvery Terminator beneath.

TRUCK VS HELICOPTER
(Terminator 2)

2 After stealing the cyborg-arm from Cyberdyne and escaping, Sarah, John and Arnie's T-800 defender make a break for it in a less than sporty truck, with the T-1000 chasing them down firstly in a helicopter and then with the aid of a liquid nitrogen-containing tanker.

Finest moment?
The tanker crashes and out-spills the nitrogen, freezing the T-1000 who then explodes into a thousand pieces by a Hasta la vista-ing Arnie.

JOHN CONNOR VS THE VIADUCT
(Terminator 2)

3 With the T-1000 locating the delinquent JC at a shopping mall, the future resistance leader escapes, with a little T-800 help, on board his motorbike and makes for LA's viaducts. The T-1000, in the cab of a truck, and Arnie, motorbike, shades and shotgun, are both in pursuit.

Finest moment?
After launching himself off a bridge, Arnie overtakes the T-1000's truck, grabs John and makes off as the cab comes to a crashing halt.

ARNIE VS THE CRANE
(Terminator 3)

4 Escaping the animal hospital, John and Kate are pursued by the T-X, driving a truck with a crane on its back. Arnie's T-850, evoking the spirit of *T2*, is pursuing on a half-inched motorbike, this time a police bike. He's still wearing shades too.

Finest moment?
Arnie swinging on the crane as the T-X steers him through the glass front of a road-side building before landing him on a fire truck, much to the surprise of the fire crew.

TERMINATOR VS CAMERON
(The Sarah Connor Chronicles)

5 The pilot for *The Sarah Connor Chronicles* assuaged fans' worries by being every bit the action-fest that the films had been. Building from rescuing the young John Connor from school through a *T2*-esque car chase, and with a healthy dose of time-travelling too, the show matched the film's pyrotechnics.

Finest moment?
Destroying Cromartie with an isotope-fuelled weapon, escaping from the bank vault, and travelling, sans-clothes, from 1999 to 2007.

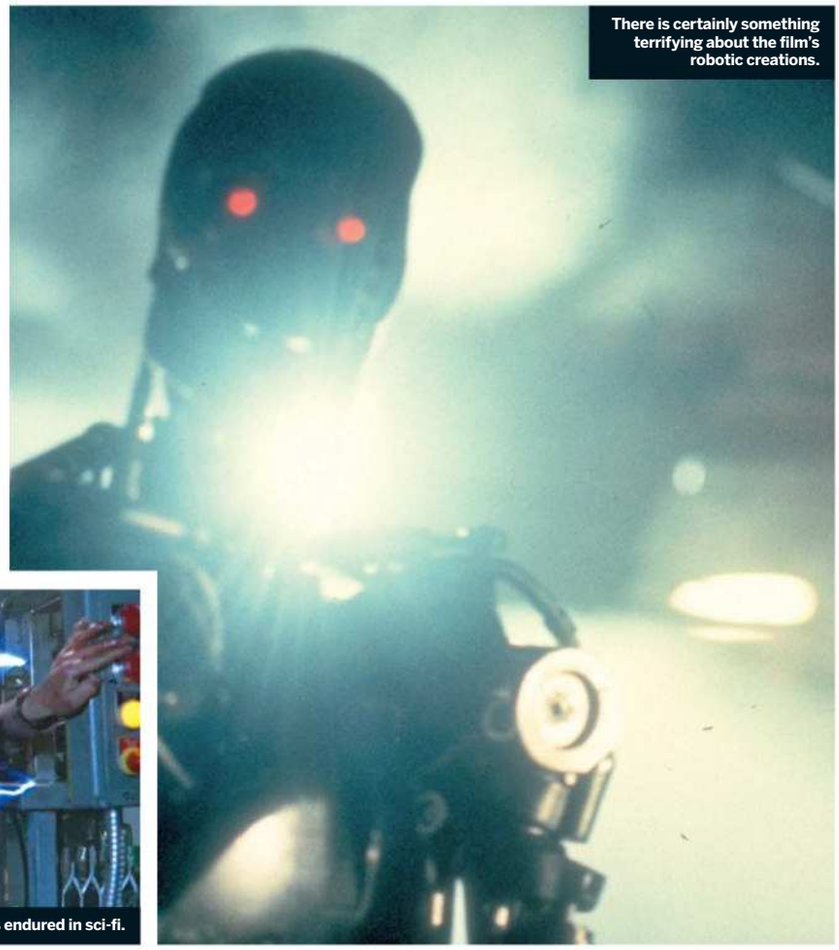
The original *Terminator* was made on a tiny budget compared to its sequel.

Connor. 'Tech Noir', as Cameron titled it, was not merely the name of the club but rather a ready-made sub-genre title for the film, the meeting of the noir styles with a technology bent.

To capture the complex design Cameron has conceived in his sickness-induced delirium for the Terminator's endoskeleton, the Canadian looked to Stan Winston. Then a budding make-up and special effects artist, Winston had his work cut out if he was to realistically capture the essence of the flesh-covered machine, but his ambition was matched only by Cameron's, who wanted a very distinct and obvious dichotomy between the outward human and the inward machine. The results would be some of the most daring effects then conceived, an achievement the franchise would become known for repeating.

One man who was not so enthused with the picture was Harlan Ellison. Cameron attributed part of his inspiration for *The Terminator* to two episodes of *The Outer Limits*, 'Soldier' and 'Demon With A Glass Hand', both penned by Ellison, but the sci-fi scribe saw more than just inspiration, his voicing of discontent at this resulting in an 'acknowledgement credit' as well as a payout. The film picked up three Saturn Awards, though – Best Science Fiction Film, Best Make-Up and Best Writing – and more importantly was a box office hit. On a meagre budget of $7 million, certainly compared to Cameron's later career extravagances, it pulled in a respectable $78 million internationally.

Arriving in 1991, *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* took the template set out by *The Terminator* – fast-paced storytelling, jaw-dropping action, deft characterisation – and dialled it up a notch. The budget had swelled to $102 million and the resultant



There is certainly something terrifying about the film's robotic creations.

The man vs machines theme has endured in sci-fi.

"SARAH ENDS UP MORE OF A MACHINE" JAMES CAMERON

film was the movie event of the year, but as well as financial changes, there were other changes afoot too.

Fresh from being the unstoppable nemesis, Arnold's T-800 returned for the sequel as the protector, a refreshing development for Schwarzenegger who was keen to play a good guy. His purpose was to protect Sarah Connor and teenage son John from a new Terminator, an advanced model T-1000, which had been sent back to finish what T-800 number one had failed to do.

"For a while we thought about having a double-Terminator, a double Arnold, but thought it might get too complicated," Cameron discussed in an interview with fellow screenwriter and screenwriting teacher Syd Field, "then we had one of those no-brainer ideas – why not have the Terminator reprogrammed to play good Terminator."

With the ultimate killing machine put through its paces by teenage John, played by Edward Furlong, it learns the meaning of a human life, resulting in a final scene goodbye – "I know now why you cry" – that tugs at the heartstrings, as Cameron intended, but it was not the only 'character' development to be made.

Introduced as a girl next-door type, Sarah begins a journey in film one that would be taken to its conclusion in the sequel. Emboldened and in full understanding of the importance of her and her son, by *T2* Sarah Connor has transformed from a plucky waitress into a muscled, weapons-trained soldier with winning the war as her sole aim. "She starts out one way, becomes fixated on that, and ends up becoming more of a machine than [Arnold's character] does," Cameron explained of Ms Connor's development.

Character developments are one thing, but *T2* would be making a splash upon its release not just for its repurposing of Arnie's talents. If *The Terminator*'s effects were groundbreaking then *T2*'s were just out of this world. The T-1000, the liquid metal 'mimetic poly alloy' Terminator capable of morphing its shape to disguise itself and twist itself into different forms, stabbing ones especially, took then-nascent computer-aided effects to the next level. "It was always a matter of urging the effects specialists to go further," Cameron said of the envelope pushing that would result in the creation of Robert Patrick's T-1000, in the same Syd Field interview. "I wanted the effect to look like a spoon going into hot fudge – it dimples down then flows up over and closes."

With the T-1000's effects – produced predominantly by Industrial Light & Magic, and Stan Winston's practical effects – spellbinding audiences, and critics alike. Despite the hefty price tag, an unheard of sum in those days, *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* was a resounding success at the box office, picking up almost $520 million worldwide as well as nabbing itself four Oscars too for, unsurprisingly, the technical departments of Best Sound, Makeup, Visual Effects and Sound Editing. The franchise, though, while sitting 'top of the world', would be about to undergo one hell of a transformation itself.

Long muted but never really gaining any solid development, the notion of a third *Terminator* film took a long time to gain any momentum. *T3* was beset by behind-the-scenes problems – both

Will we see another instalment of the great robo-fight?

The cold, hard touch of the Terminator

A franchise that absolutely will not stop

TAKE A RIDE

The Nineties oddity that is T2 3D: Battle Across Time

In 1996, James Cameron opened a *Terminator 2* 3D experience that reunited members of the cast, including Schwarzenegger, Hamilton and Furlong, at Universal Studios in Florida. It was an original *Terminator* storyline built with the 3D technology in mind, and, despite seeming gimmicky now, at the time it was revolutionary in its use of the technology. Of course, the ride now has the pleasure of having its technology upstaged by the ride's creator – *Avatar* makes the *Terminator 2* 3D experience look like amateur hour. Nevertheless, it's worth seeing for its further depiction of the post-Judgment Day apocalypse.

FOUR COLOUR KILLERS

The comic books of the robo-ruined Terminator universe

Remarkably, the *Terminator* licence has made its way between nine comic-book publishers since the first movie hit cinemas, including Marvel and, most recently, IDW Publishing for the *Terminator Salvation* adaptation. Most of the comic-books are of questionable quality, either adapting the movies directly, providing unnecessary back story or, in the worst cases, pitting the machines against other properties. In its time at Dark Horse Comics, the Terminator faced off against Superman, Aliens, RoboCop and Predators in what can only be described as a complete waste of everyone's time. Evidently, the *Terminator* franchise's best moments remain on screen.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

Twenty years of Terminator videogames, for good or bad

Appropriately, a franchise about technology taking over has taken over almost every videogame platform since its release. From the fondly remembered original DOS game in 1990 (pictured) through to the full 3D graphics of *Terminator Salvation*'s tie-in, the sophistication of videogame systems can be charted by the progression of the franchise. There was even a chess game (yes, chess) developed by IntraCorp and published by Capstone Software for DOS in 1993, as well as arcade machines, pinball games and Game Boy software.

COLLECTABLE CARNAGE

A global memorabilia invasion

Almost as widespread as the videogames arm of the franchise, its comic output and the theme park rides put together is the collectable aspect. *Terminator* toys were a staple of many childhoods around the time of *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*'s release, and as the franchise has matured, so has the level of collectables available. Recently, the T-800 forearm from *Judgment Day* sold at auction for over $25,000, while the leather jacket worn by Arnie went for nearly $5,000. Cheaper collectables exist, of course, but for those willing to pay top dollar, you can still get a life-sized Terminator in your living room. But not a real one... yet.

SCORING JUDGMENT DAY

Brad Fiedel's iconic soundtrack

Brad Fiedel initially wrote solely for television until he was picked by James Cameron to pen the score for *The Terminator*. His metallic sounding, pulsing theme was one of the key contributing factors to the film's success, and remains as iconic a component of the film, and the ensuing franchise, as Arnold Schwarzenegger himself. Fiedel then went on to work on *Fright Night*, and its sequel, and scored *Blue Steel*, directed by Cameron's one-time partner Kathryn Bigelow. He returned to the world of cyborgs and Skynet for *Terminator 2*, however, knocking out another great soundtrack for the robots, and reteamed with Cameron again for the 1994 actioner *True Lies*, and scored the 1995 Keanu Reeves sci-fi-er *Johnny Mnemonic* too. His film career has slowed somewhat since the late Nineties, though, and while his music themes were used for *T3* he was not directly involved with the film himself, but he still remains the author of one of the most recognisable, and chilling, sci-fi scores of all time.

"MOVIES WITH 3 AFTER THEM ARE NOT VERY GOOD"

Orion Pictures and Carolco, the studios behind one and two had gone bankrupt – and when it did arrive in 2003 it was in a vastly different form to what anyone, not least the fans of the franchise, would have expected. Shorn of Linda Hamilton, and Sarah Connor (she had died of leukaemia), Edward Furlong and, most surprisingly James Cameron too, there was little to link this second sequel with its predecessors, save for the presence of Arnold Schwarzenegger who, after much time attempting unsuccessfully to convince Cameron to return, signed on to reprise his role as the T-800, again in the protector role. With so much room left for newcomers, Nick Stahl took on the role of John Connor, now a young man living 'off the grid' so as to avoid Skynet tracking him down and Claire Danes joined as Kate Brewster, John's future wife. The role for a new Terminator was filled by Kristanna Loken's T-X, the first female Terminator, and one beset with all kinds of weaponry that would make the T-1000's 'stabbing arm' pale in comparison.

Most talked about at the time, though, was the behind-the-camera line-up change with Jonathan Mostow (helmer of the decidedly revisionist Second World War submarine drama *U-571* and action thriller *Breakdown*) stepping into Cameron's role, and he always had very clear intentions for the film.

"I wasn't trying to relaunch the series," he said in an interview with *IGN* after the film's release, "I was simply trying to make a movie that would be the third in a trilogy and stand up with the other movies. Let's face it, most movies with a '3' after them aren't very good."

Indeed, the arrival of *Terminator 3: Rise Of The Machines*, lived up to, in part, this acknowledgement of the regular fate of 'Part IIIs'. Yet the film stayed true to Mostow's intention of not reinventing. A chase format predominates its tale as John flees the T-X with a T-850 for protection, it delivered in the action stakes, with one multi-vehicular chase scene in particular attracting plaudits, and had enough of a new take on the time-travelling fate of Judgment Day to ensure that it had enough of a life of its own.

Although highly successful blockbusters, the first two *Terminator* movies also had something of an indie spirit to them. *T3* didn't. Taking up the budget-pushing endeavours of *T2*, *Rise Of The Machines* upped the ante by being the largest budget ever to be greenlit by a studio – $170 million – and it is clear to see where much of this, other than Arnie's hefty price tag, went. The film also received plaudits aplenty for its stunt work as opposed to purely CGI-aided action set pieces, with films of the era more often than not content to merely greenscreen away until audiences had become numb to the effects generated.

A key area of concern for the filmmakers, as well as the fans, was Arnie's involvement, and whether the 12 years that had elapsed since would prove conspicuous in the finished film. When a motorbike accident laid the former Mister Universe up in hospital with a number of cracked ribs, it seemed, certainly to the film's director, that *T3* would have to be postponed, yet the T-850's resilience and steadfast dedication to the project surprised everyone.

"A few weeks later, when most of us would just be getting out of the electronic bed that lifts us and are maybe thinking of going from the walker to the crutches, he's back in the gym three hours a day working out," Mostow told *IGN*. "On some of the advanced make-up stages he had six hours of make-up to do, he'd have to show up at four in the morning, we'd shoot and at lunch we'd stop. He had a special trailer here with a gym and so he worked out and then shoot the rest of the day." Arnold's determination paid off, though, not just in his ability to convince in the role he had made his own almost 20 years earlier but by Mostow's assertion that, as a result of all of his training, he had the same body dimensions as he did for *Terminator 2*. "He brought in his *T2* jacket… It fit like a glove!"

Audiences remained unconvinced and although the film pulled in $433 million, it was less than some had expected. The film's change in tone was cited as one of the reasons, and the shift into not campy but almost tongue-in-cheek humour (the T-X's breast inflator and Arnie's Elton John specs clear cases in point) certainly didn't sit with the Skynet saga so far. It would be a while before the franchise returned, and the effect of *T3* would be felt in more ways than one.

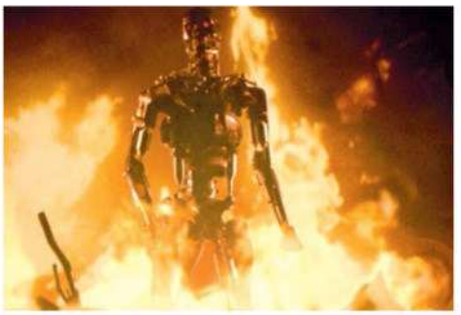
"I developed and worked on the movie *Terminator 3: Rise Of The Machines*," said James Middleton executive producer of *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* – which premiered on

Terminator is the ultimate robot franchise, which many others have aped across the years.

Arnie's presence may not be very stealthy, but it sure does demand your respect.

TERMINATE THIS

Five reasons why the Terminator franchise is indispensable



STAN WINSTONÐS ENDOSKELETON

Winston's crowning moment from the first film, based on Cameron's designs, achieves the effect of conveying what a moral vacuum the Terminator is – the ultimate killing machine. An expert piece of effects work, it remains a key step in the development of visual effects, and has aged well. When it steps out of the burning remains of the truck in *The Terminator*'s climax, it is terrifying, whether it's 1984 or 2010.

THE GOVERNATOR

A body builder, then Conan the Barbarian, then Governor of California, but forever a Terminator, such is the influence of Arnold's on-screen performance that he will be always remembered for his iconic turn(s) as the killer-defender from the future. Heck, he even used some of his most loved lines from the franchise in his campaign speeches. 'Hasta la vista' indeed.

LIQUID METAL

The arrival of the T-1000 brought not just a new model of Terminator, but a new dawn in visual effects. Two years before Spielberg opened *Jurassic Park*, the sight of Robert Patrick's head reforming after receiving a shot gun blast to the cranium, or the spectacular death scene in which all of the characters the T-1000 has adopted in its quest for JC morph in a fatalistic gasp for an extended battery life, were unlike anything movies had seen.

TIME TRAVEL PARADOXES

Who doesn't like them? Sarah Connor even confesses herself the brain-pickling peculiarity of it all and that you could 'go mad' thinking about it, but the trans-temporal logic of the films is part of what makes them so very irresistible. And while it's not quite as cool as a time-travelling DeLorean, time-flying in a giant electrical bubble is pretty damn nifty, we must say. Losing your clothes is a bit of a bummer, though.

"I'LL BE BACK"

"Come with me if you want to live"; "I'll be back"; "Hasta la vista baby"; er... "She'll be back!" – the series boasts definitive catchphrases left, right and centre, many of which have surfaced time and again. When the T-800 extends a hand to Sarah Connor at Pescadero State and offers his iconic greeting of help, it's hard not to be cowed by how cool it is, but it's not quite as cool, though, when John Connor says it in *Salvation*.

SKYNET'S DESIGNS ON MANKIND

THE TERMINATORS

From obvious-to-spot T-600s to hyper-advanced T-Xs, Skynet's killing machines have taken many guises. Here we take a look at some of the most iconic forms they have adopted…

T-800

Why do they look like Arnie, surely not the best visual approach for an infiltration unit? But it is an effective, and deeply chilling, one and despite facing off against Terminators more advanced and complex than it, the 'classic' T-800 design usually comes out on top too.

HYDROBOTS

Underwater Terminators that look like some sort of robo-sea snake mutated from those tentacle creations in the *Matrix*-verse, the Hydrobots can, obviously, swim through the water. But they're rubbish on land, which is where most of mankind is, and Terminators can, like, hold their breath anyway!

AIRBORNE H-KS

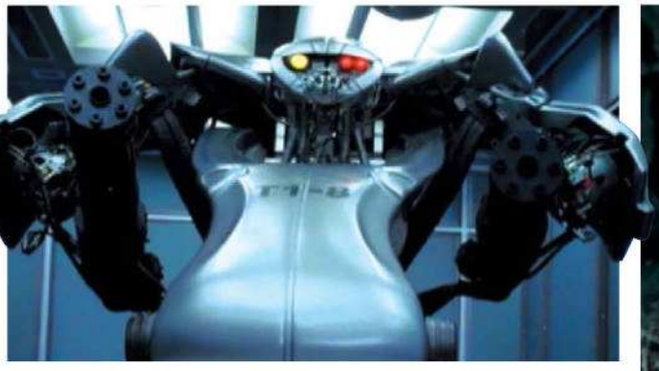
The flying hunter-killers, glimpsed firstly in flash-forward sequences in Cameron's franchise starter, and seen in McG's most recent addition, are towering, flying machines that swoop over the Earth and pretty much adhere to their rather catchy and spot-on nomenclature – they hunt stuff and then kill it. So not good if you see one coming over the brow of the hill.

T-1000

If the T-800 was a tank, then the T-1000 is a Porsche, James Cameron explained of the design aesthetic behind *T2*'s rather terrifying creation. With liquid metal for a body and the ability to morph into any shape it so pleases (mimetic polyalloy, to coin a phrase), Robert Patrick's Terminator is one of the series' most famous.

BIKES

With Terminators that are taller than a house, and ones that can fly, it seems unnecessary, yet very cool, to have ones that look like radio controlled bikes, yet that is what Skynet did. After all, nothing is achieved without trial and error. After one got knocked over and repurposed by John Connor they probably saw the error of their ways, though.



T-1

An early stage in the development of the Terminators, these robo-pioneers run on tracks like a tank, have eyes like WALL•E's love interest, and machine gun arms like ED-209, and are there at the start when the machines begin to take over. Simple they may be, but they do represent Skynet's affection for efficiency.

T-X

Armed with an assortment of hi-tech gadgetry (the ability to control most machines), arm-mounted weaponry (always a bonus), and inflatable boobs too (of course) the T-X, or 'Terminatrix', is an ultra-advanced Terminator. It still manages to get usurped by Arnie's, slightly older looking, T-850, though, despite tech advancement that would've had Steve Jobs giddy with excitement.

TĐ600

Terminator Salvation's big, tall, machine gun toting models. Good for laying waste to anything and everything in its path, and for generally keeping control. Would definitely not be so for good for infiltration-type tasks one would presume, or for blending in at all.

Sarah Connor Chronicles kept up a high level of action.

SUMMER GLAU'S CAMERON

An unspecified type of Terminator, Cameron is one of the most advanced, particularly in relation to her ability to mimic and convincingly pass off the depiction of human emotions, and her ability to eat too, which is quite handy tool when trying to pull this off.

HARVESTER

Michael Bay noted the Autobot similarity in *Salvation*'s hulking beasts, and there are similarities to be noted in the tall bi-pedal giants sent out to catch humans. Why do they do this? So that the human prey can be zipped off for secret research.

"THERE IS NO FATE BUT WHAT WE MAKE"

Fox in 2008 – in a roundtable interview with The Futon Critic. This was five years after the future was rewritten in *Rise Of The Machines*, and the *Terminator* franchise was back, minus Arnie and a theatrical release thanks to its new small-screen guise. "And after that movie was released, I felt like I really – as a fan of the franchise – I really wanted to see Sarah again. And the idea of seeing her on a television show was even more interesting to me because you get to see more of what makes Sarah an iconic character." The plight of Sarah and John began once more, in serialised form, ignoring the theatrics of *T3* and following on from *T2*, and there were many similarities with the Cameron *Terminator* years, not least the naming of the new protector Terminator, played by Summer Glau – Cameron. The 'characters on the run' format was reprised with John, Sarah and Cameron fleeing, with the thematic emphasis on the mother-son relationship. "Sarah is always concerned about her mortality from the standpoint that she worries about dying and whether her work will be done," *SCC* executive producer Josh Friedman explained to *i09*, speaking about the narrative arc.

The show received a heavy marketing push prior to its premiere, which pulled in 18.6 million viewers Stateside, the highest in three years for a scripted drama, and Fox's highest for eight years. The first season attracted a not immodest 11.4 million viewers too, leading to the commission of a second season beginning in the autumn of 2008. However, falling ratings saw the second season audience figures drop to 4.63 million and the show was not renewed, despite plans already being well underway for the third season, with Friedman lamenting on an official show blog that "good shows are cancelled every year, smart shows, worthy shows."

With Sarah Connor Chronicles cancelled, the way was clear for the franchise to boom its way back onto the big screen in its fourth cinematic outing. "I wasn't at all interested in making *Terminator 4*," director McG told *The Telegraph*. Traditionally he was music video helmer with a handful of feature films to his name, and at the time of the announcement of his role as director of the new franchise instalment, most of the fanbase's reactions would have been, to be honest, similar. It seemed like a strange direction for the franchise to take, but as information began to trickle out the future for the series began to look up.

"The first three *Terminator* films were present day pictures where Terminators come back in time to hunt Sarah and John," he explained. "Our film takes place post-Judgment Day and is a look at the world that James Cameron only ever teased us with in the earlier pictures. [He] always maintained he had told the story after two pictures and it was only the idea of dealing with the future war that piqued my interest. Everything is difficult for humans now. It's difficult to get food, difficult to get energy, everything is depleted and they're being hunted."

Essentially a war film where the resistance is battling Skynet and its hordes of Terminators, McG's film abandons the chase movie dynamics that the preceding three films had adhered to. A prequel as well as a sequel, in many respects, it expanded the *Terminator* franchise in a new direction, without maligning that which had gone before. Indeed, McG even visited Cameron before the film to ask for his blessing, outlining his intentions for *Salvation*, yet he was met with a less than favourable response, Cameron only saying he hoped the picture would be good and that he would save his opinion until having seen it.

After much legal wrangling had been dispensed with over the rights, The Halcyon Company picked up ownership and embarked on what was slated to be a new trilogy in the series, with shooting on this proposed first instalment lasting for 77 days in New Mexico. Opting for a new look, the film took on a post-apocalyptic visual identity, the backdrop being the burnt-out wasteland of post-Judgment Day, a stark contrast to the contemporary cityscapes of the original three films. The production was not without its set backs, though. On set injuries are commonplace, and were no less present here – it was a $200 million action film after all – but more damaging were two events that rocked the production to a greater or lesser degree.

Firstly there was new John Connor Christian Bale's now infamous on set 'freak out', for want of a better expression, the actor succumbing to a moment of method madness that saw him verbally berate a crew member in an extensive, and extended, four-letter-word frenzy. The hitch being that while these sorts of incidents tend to become Hollywood folklore, this particular one was captured, recorded and leaked onto the internet. Much chuckling and parody ensued in internet forums and newsrooms around the world, but for McG, the incident was taken out of context.

"I'm to blame for the whole thing," he proclaimed in another *Telegraph* interview. "It's my job to create a safe environment on the set at all times so that actors can explore any given emotion and believe in the sanctity of the film set. If that's taken out of context it would seem wildly offensive. In a great many ways this is a war movie so I am on the set getting in Christian's face to get him fired up and that's never meant to get outside that arena." Outside it went, though, and the incident was widely reported, even as far as making BBC breakfast news, at which point an oversight led to a portion of the tirade being broadcast without any editing.

The second incident was the original ending being leaked onto the internet, causing the production to have to change the film's conclusion, keeping the thematic essence, but changing the events.

The film opened in the summer of 2009 but despite the fervour for a new *Terminator* instalment, and the change of direction the film offered – and with some impressive work done by McG too, in the action stakes especially – the film failed to live up to expectations, for viewers, critics and ultimately the studios behind it. For a film that is essentially the most expensive independent film of all time, it recouped its estimated $200 million budget but only managed to make it to a global haul of $372 million, less than *T3* and a far cry from *T2*'s blockbusting.

While *Terminator Genisys* gears for home release, what is not up for debate is the franchise's legacy: integral in the evolution of special effects, one of the most beloved sci-fi series of all time, and preservation in the annals of contemporary cinema via the national Film Registry. But, as Sarah Connor said: "There is no fate but what we make for ourselves."

STANLEY KUBRICK'S MIDAS TOUCH PROMPTED THE FORMATION OF A MULTITUDE OF GENRES, AND HE'S GONE DOWN IN HISTORY AS A CINEMATIC VISIONARY. IT'S HIS EFFECT ON HORROR, HOWEVER, THAT HAS ARGUABLY BEEN THE MOST INFLUENTIAL, TAKING AN AVERAGE HAUNTED HOUSE TALE BY STEPHEN KING, REMOULDING IT IN HIS OWN IMAGE AND MAKING IT SHINE. WE BRAVE THE DARK OF THE SHINING…

THE SHINING

Film

RUNNING TIME: 119 minutes
RELEASE DATE: 23 May 1980
DIRECTOR: Stanley Kubrick
WRITERS: Stanley Kubrick, Diane Johnson
CAST: Jack Nicholson, Shelley Duvall, Danny Lloyd, Scatman Crothers

About

Jack Torrance (Jack Nicholson) and his family arrive at the Overlook Hotel as Torrance takes on the role of winter caretaker. He aims to use the opportunity afforded by the solitude to write a book. However, the hotel is built on the site of an ancient Indian burial ground, and his psychically gifted son Danny (Danny Lloyd) has a disturbing premonition about his family's visit. Danny's vision comes to disturbing fruition as his father succumbs to the malevolent whims of the hotel. Or does he? Can Jack's long-suffering family survive his increasingly violent descent?

Stanley Kubrick did everything, and that's not an exaggeration. Romance, drama, sci-fi, historical epic, comedy… the 14 films he directed were all completely different, yet shared many traits. He had an eye for a stunning shot, the cinematography in his movies providing ample evidence of this. He stuffed his movies with bundles of subtext and hidden meaning, too, and people have spent many a long night discussing why they think he shot certain movies in certain ways.

No movie is a greater example of this than his 1980 adaptation of Stephen King's *The Shining*. On the surface it's a masterfully paced piece of brooding horror, building to a climax that's as bleak and unforgiving as its winter backdrop, but people have found countless hidden visual motifs and metaphors that are either incredibly insightful or the outlandish dribblings of conspiracy theorists, depending on how you tend to look at life. Whatever your opinion, it's testament to just how layered and important the *The Shining* actually is that different people get so many different things out of watching it.

It's all the more remarkable when you consider that for all intents and purposes, *The Shining* was Kubrick's attempt at making what he'd probably deem a popcorn movie after 1975's *Barry Lyndon* fell a bit flat. He set out to make a commercial film, albeit one where he could express himself artistically. Though it made a profit, it received a tumultuous critical reception at the time of release, much like many of his other movies.

King's novel was an obvious supernatural horror and also somehow autobiographical, the ghosts taking advantage of Jack Torrance's vulnerability (brought about by alcoholism, which King suffered from at the time), urging him to go after his family. The novel reflected King's struggles at the time and the realisation that should he continue down this path, he'd destroy his family for real. It ends with Torrance effectively sacrificing himself and letting his family move on, thus redeeming the character, and though it's not a completely happy ending, it at least ended with some degree of hope.

Naturally, Kubrick wasn't having any of that. He had no such place for redemption in his tale, as he sought to infuse his own misanthropic proclivities in the story. His vision for the Torrance family was far more negative and destructive. There's less focus on Jack's problem with alcohol and more on his writer's block. In the novel, Torrance is a good man struggling with these demons. There's the sense in the film, though, that Torrance himself is something of a demon. Critic Frederick Clarke opined "Instead of playing a normal man who becomes insane, Jack Nicholson portrays a crazy man attempting to remain sane."

Maybe it's the casting of Nicholson that causes this. King himself suggested to Kubrick that they cast a more 'everyman' actor for the role, but Kubrick declined, and it's to his credit that he did, as from the first moment the audience sees Nicholson as Torrance they're left with the uneasy feeling that something isn't right.

The supernatural elements are nowhere near as overt, and again this helps exacerbate the brooding menace of Kubrick's interpretation. Clearly he's not the full shilling. Is he genuinely talking to ghosts or is the isolation and cabin fever just bringing out what's already bubbling underneath? It's important to note that in scenes where Torrance is conversing with the spirits there's always a mirror involved. Only when his terrorised family start witnessing the spirits do we realise that there may be nefarious forces at work.

Jack's decline is effective enough on its own, but Kubrick's direction elevates the sense of uneasiness borne of the influence of David Lynch's *Eraserhead* (one of Kubrick's favourites). In fact, he got the cast and crew together for a screening of *Eraserhead* to illustrate what he expected of them. Though the tale Kubrick tells is obviously far more straightforward than Lynch's surrealist horror, there's no denying some of the film rubbed off on the spirit of *The Shining*. This is notably apparent in the scene when Danny rides his tricycle around the hotel, each one becoming more twisted and maze like than the last, culminating in his encounter with the twins. Jack's brief frisson in Room 237 is equally unsettling, and wouldn't feel out of place in *Eraserhead*.

Shelley Duvall and Danny Lloyd are game as Torrance's prey. Duvall was panned at the time for her performance

"A MASTERFULLY PACED PIECE OF BROODING HORROR, BUILDING TO A BLEAK CLIMAX"

The huge number of iconic scenes ensures *The Shining* remains a classic.

Danny Lloyd puts in one of the all-time great performances from a child actor.

The use of blood and gore was kept to a minimum, making it all the more shocking when it was present.

5 SUPER SCENES

The film's most iconic moments

TWIN MAGIC

Young Danny's frenzied pedalling tours around the innards of the hotel are shot from behind the little tyke, every corner he turns threatening to reveal something horrific. As he innocently explores every area, the situation becomes horribly tense.

T EACH TRICYCLE SCENE IS MORE LABYRINTHINE THAN THE PRECEDING ONE, SIGNIFYING HOW LOST IN THE HOTEL THE FAMILY IS BECOMING.

DO NOT DISTURB

Jack, against all better judgement, decides to have a look in Room 237. To his shock he finds that someone is in there waiting for him – someone not at all initially unwelcome. The nude visage approaches and embraces him, only to reveal the heinous horror hag within.

T THE HOTEL IN THE BOOK WAS BASED ON A REAL HOTEL, AND THE ROOM IN QUESTION IS GENUINELY SUPPOSED TO BE HAUNTED.

DOMESTIC BLISS

After Wendy finds the sum of Jack's work on his typewriter, he surprises and threatens her, proving just how far gone he is. A frenzied Wendy tries to defend herself as Jack stalks her up the staircase, culminating in a well-aimed baseball bat to the cranium and a tumble down the stairs.

T DUVALL ALLEGEDLY HAD A HELLISH TIME AT THE HANDS OF KUBRICK. HE MADE HER REDO ONE SCENE OVER 100 TIMES.

I AXED YOU A QUESTION

Everyone references it, but that's for a reason. It has been immortalised on the walls of countless student bedrooms and by, er, Lenny Henry. Jack once again terrorises his wife, trying to break through a door before poking his head through, grin across his face, exclaiming… well, you know.

T A FAKE DOOR WAS ORIGINALLY USED, BUT NICHOLSON TORE THROUGH IT TOO QUICKLY, SO THEY USED A REAL ONE.

THE CRYSTAL MAZE

At the terrifying climax, Jack attempts filicide as he chases after his young son through the Garden Maze amid an almost picturesque snowy winter backdrop. The son outsmarts his mad father and escapes with his mother, and Jack becomes part of the hotel, trapped in the labyrinth.

T THE TOPIARY MONSTERS IN THE BOOK WERE MEANT TO APPEAR, BUT BUDGET CONSTRAINTS FORCED THE USE OF THE MAZE.

A number of the novel's supernatural elements were removed.

(even earning a Razzie nomination), but her histrionic performance as the terrified Wendy Torrance isn't out of step at all. Her shrieking vulnerability contrasts nicely with Danny's stoic terror and Jack's determined malice. Lloyd is engaging as the younger Torrance, hiding his 'gift' from everyone (in the novel he was fairly open about his abilities) apart from the jovial Hallorann (Scatman Crothers), who shares Danny's abilities. However, it's easy to get the impression that they're just the window dressing for Jack's descent into insanity, which is clearly the story Kubrick wanted to tell. The film cuts down on the back story and fluff, and even Danny's 'shining' abilities. They're present, but Jack Torrance's gradual succumbing to the 'spirits' takes centre stage here.

Deviations like these are the reason King was initially unhappy with the movie. Kubrick took out the moments of hope and outlandish supernatural elements (such as topiary monsters) and left things ambiguous. In the novel, Hallorann comes and saves the day, providing a distraught Danny with solace after his father's self-sacrifice. In the movie he's brutally murdered. This went against the message King wanted to convey, and he wasn't shy in voicing his displeasure.

"Parts of the film are chilling, charged with a relentlessly claustrophobic terror, but others fall flat. Not that religion has to be involved in horror, but a visceral skeptic such as Kubrick just couldn't grasp the sheer inhuman evil of the Overlook Hotel. So he looked, instead, for evil in the characters and made the film into a domestic tragedy with only vaguely supernatural overtones. That was the basic flaw: because he couldn't believe, he couldn't make the film believable to others. What's wrong with Kubrick's version of *The Shining* is that it's a film by a man who thinks too much and feels too little; and that's why, for all its virtuoso effects, it never gets you by the throat and hangs on the way real horror should."

Despite King's qualms, it can't be denied that the film stands head and shoulders above the source material. The movie wouldn't be anywhere near as memorable if it was a straight adaptation. We'd have clunky, over-the-top spectral encounters and bad claymation monsters. King argues that the film isn't believable, but by convincing the audience that maybe the ghosts and visions are mere manifestations of Jack's insanity, Kubrick makes the unreal real. Jack's the monster, and no ghost can excuse what kind of man he is.

The brutal murder of Hallorann almost feels like a giant 'sod off' from Kubrick to King, any ray of hope and redemption

KUBRICK'S CUBE

Kubrick didn't just revolutionise horror; he provided the template for other genres, too

Want to share your thoughts? Follow us on Twitter @SciFiNow

SPARTACUS

Kubrick's sword-and-sandals epic is still a fantastic watch, and a fixture for those lazy Boxing Days when you're filled with too much booze and dead animals. Every historical epic owes *Spartacus* a nod, even the fantastically macho, nudity and bloodshed-fuelled series *Spartacus: Blood And Sand*.

T KIRK DOUGLAS AND KUBRICK WERE AT LOGGERHEADS THROUGHOUT THE MOVIE DUE TO CREATIVE DIFFERENCES.

DR STRANGELOVE

Never before has the impending apocalypse been so much fun. Kubrick's satire about nuclear war was drawn from his own fears as a child, having come of age after the end of World War II. Peter Sellers steals the show and takes on three very different roles. George C Scott is also fantastic as a trigger-happy general.

T THERE'S A BIT IN *THE MUMMY RETURNS* WHERE A SKELETON APES THE ICONIC 'BOMB RIDING' SCENE ON A LOG.

2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

Kubrick's adaptation of Arthur C Clarke's *The Sentinel* took five years for him to produce, though apparently it was worth it, as it's seen as *the* 'big' science fiction film before George Lucas tootled along a few years later. It inspired a whole slew of similar-looking movies, books and even games.

T THE FILM WAS SHOWN IN A PRIVATE VIEWING AT THE VATICAN, AND SURPRISINGLY WENT DOWN A STORM.

Kubrick focused more on Jack's descent into madness rather than the disintegration of the family unit, much to King's chagrin.

"JACK'S A MONSTER, AND NO GHOST CAN EXCUSE WHAT KIND OF MAN HE IS"

snuffed out in an instant by an axe to the chest. The last image of Jack, frozen in the garden maze, is distinctly un-Hollywood. He's dead, a murderer, his family is damaged forever and it's all his fault. What's perverse, though, is that in a conversation with Jack Nicholson, Kubrick dryly intoned that he believed *The Shining* to be an optimistic film, as any film that deals with any kind of existence after death has to be optimistic.

You can have fun (if you could call it that) with *The Shining*, though, thanks to Kubrick's predilection for imagery and meaning. The documentary *Room 237* chronicles various interpretations of the movie. Though some of the theories are pretty outrageous (one chap believed *The Shining* was Kubrick's way of admitting he filmed the fake moon landing for NASA in the Sixties), it shows just how dense and layered the movie is. Of course, it's up to personal interpretation whether Kubrick intended to include such references, but the fact that each scene is so painstakingly packed with potential meaning – from desk arrangements to the design on the carpets – shows just how unique and motivated a visionary Kubrick was.

By concentrating on the human drama, Kubrick elevated the horror movie. Now, horror didn't have to have buckets of blood to be effective; it could be layered with meaning and fraught with atmosphere. The genre as a whole would be in a poorer place without the movie. It works so well because it resonates so strongly. From the elevators gushing blood and the deceased Jack's frozen rictus grin to the oft-cited and infamous "Here's Johnny!" line, it's full of moments that'll find themselves on plenty of talking head-infested 'top 50 horror scenes' programs for years to come

The Shining stands as one of Kubrick's finest. He only went on to direct two more movies (1987's *Full Metal Jacket* and 1999's *Eyes Wide Shut*) and though both were fine in their own right, *The Shining* is the most multi-layered and focused, and remains unblemished by an unnecessary remake (King's 1997 TV adaptation doesn't count, largely due to it being dreadful). It's a timeless reminder that we can blame all the phantoms we want, but the only true horror in this world is humankind itself.

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE

Kubrick's 1971 adaptation of Anthony Burgess' novel personified many people's fears for the future, with feral gangs running amok and causing untold misery to many with virtually no consequence. Its visual motifs and themes have influenced countless movies since, not to mention the band Blur.

KUBRICK HIMSELF PULLED THE FILM FROM CINEMAS AFTER COPYCAT CRIMES TOOK PLACE, HORRIFYING THE DIRECTOR.

WHAT IF?

Jack Torrance was played by someone else?

Jack Nicholson was always the first choice for the role, but many other names were mooted for the project, some of which may even have changed the tone and direction of the movie completely.

Jon Voight and Robert De Niro were discussed. Both are good solid actors, and would have given Jack Torrance the 'everyman' quality that King wanted. However, another name was mooted that certainly piques the curiosity: Robin Williams.

Williams was known for his comedic output, but he subsequently proved that he was fantastic when being serious too (as in *One Hour Photo* and Christopher Nolan's *Insomnia*), so it's interesting to see just how his career would have gone had Kubrick taken a chance on him. It would also be interesting to see how the dynamics of the film would change. His change from embittered family man to murderous possessed lunatic would most definitely have been something to behold.

WHY IS THE SHINING A MODERN CLASSIC?

IT HASN'T AGED

Other haunted house movies like *The Haunting* and *House On Haunted Hill* are perfectly endearing, but that wasn't their original intention. There's no unintentional comedy to be found from *The Shining*, and its fear factor hasn't diminished.

SPARING USE OF SPECIAL EFFECTS

The Shining was largely a human tale, and thus didn't need to rely on any potentially embarrassing ghoulish effects. When used, they heightened the horror, the curt flash of the twins' murder being an obvious example.

WELL CAST

Nicholson, erm, shines as Torrance, a man on the precipice of destructive insanity, and Duvall is perfectly cast as the put-upon housewife. Also, Scatman Crothers is a warm, comforting presence… until he's mercilessly chopped down.

MINIMUM OF JUMP SCARES

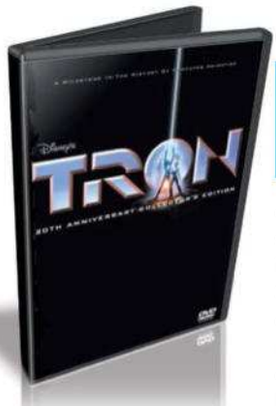
The Shining has a few jumpy moments, but much of the horror comes from the anticipation and impending dread. It's so expertly shot that even Jack conversing with his son feels threatening.

UNPARALLELED

Few American horror movies have come close to evoking the tension of *The Shining*. There have been good attempts by people like Brad Anderson (his excellent *Session 9* explores similar themes), but most supernatural horror movies since have been cheap CGI-reliant facsimiles.

ON THE CUSP OF A NEW DAWN IN SPECIAL EFFECTS MOVIEMAKING, WRITER/DIRECTOR STEVEN LISBERGER'S TRON BOLDLY WENT WHERE NO MOVIE HAD BEEN BEFORE. FEATURING A CUTTING EDGE COMBINATION OF LIVE ACTION, BACK-LIT ANIMATION AND CGI, HE TOOK CINEMAGOERS ON A JOURNEY INTO THE FUTURE. SCIFINOW VENTURES INTO THE MAINFRAME AND FACES THE MASTER CONTROL PROGRAM TO REVISIT A GENRE CLASSIC

TRON



Film

Running time: 92 mins
Release date: 9 July 1982
Director: Steven Lisberger
Writers: Steven Lisberger, Bonnie MacBird
Cast: Jeff Bridges, Bruce Boxleitner, David Warner, Cindy Morgan, Barnard Hughes, Dan Shor

About

The brainchild of Steven Lisberger, *Tron* (from elec-Tron-ic) was a pioneering sci-fi film that blended live action, back-lit animation and then groundbreaking CGI techniques to tell its tale of Jeff Bridges' computer programmer, Flynn, who is 'sucked' into the virtual world of a computer system from which he must fight to escape. After securing $5 million in financing, Lisberger was turned down by a number of studios before Disney took a gamble to the tune of $12 million, but the film underperformed, picking up $33 million in the US (being released just after Spielberg's block-busting *E.T.* probably didn't help).

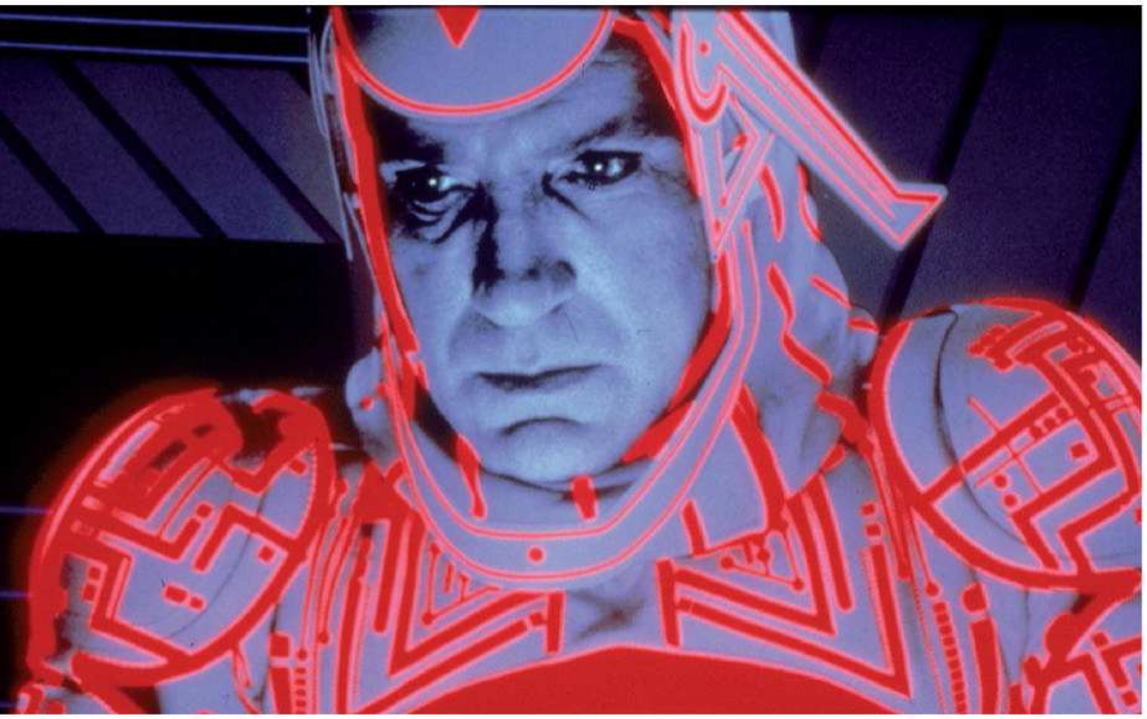
"*Tron* stands alone. There is nothing to compare it to," Jeff Bridges says of the 1982 Disney film he starred in, and he is certainly not wrong. In fact, hyperbole and superlatives tend to surround *Tron*. Sure, its visual effects, by today's Na'avi-infused 3D standards, are dated, but at the start of the Eighties they were nothing short of revolutionary. To achieve the distinctive look of *Tron*, the film's writer and director Steven Lisberger used a combination of live action footage, back-lit animation sequences and computer generated imagery. In an era before the world had gone digital, *Tron* presented cinemagoers with something they had never seen before and a story – a battle for freedom set *inside* a computer – which was as futuristic, and no doubt unfathomable to much of the public, as could be. As well as breaking down barriers and forging new methods of filmmaking, *Tron* posed something of a contradiction, though, too.

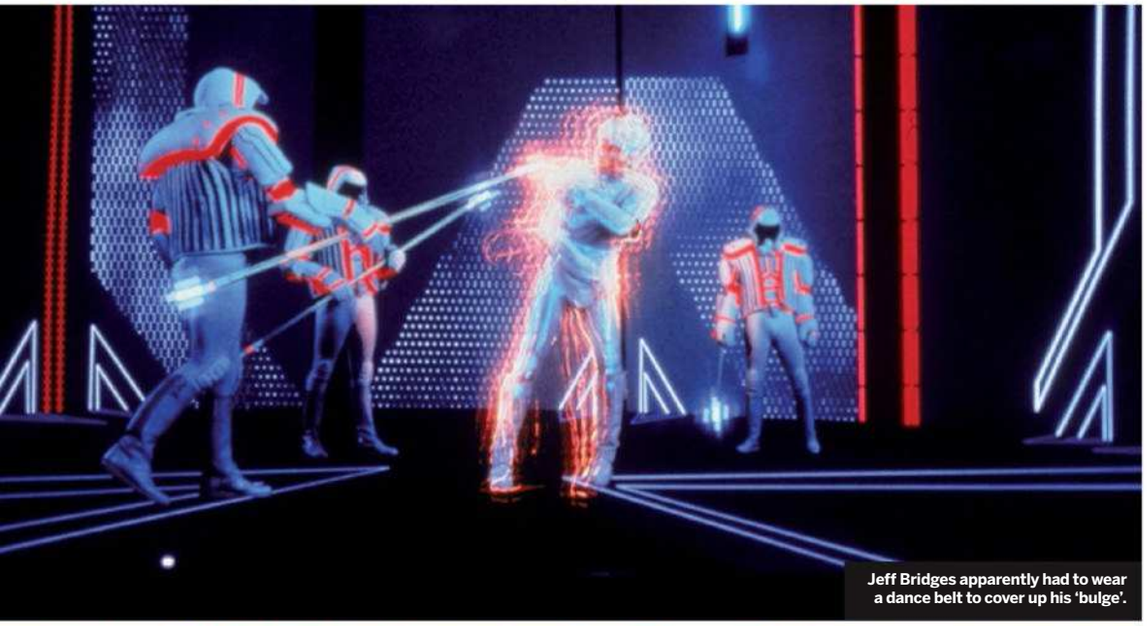
A Disney-funded special effects action film on the one, and more instantly visible, hand, *Tron* had harder, sci-fi tendencies too. A story about corporate conspiracy, the perils of technology (the film's Master Control Program is as threatening a creation as *2001*'s HAL), and the importance of freedom and the fight to preserve it. Or, as producer Donald Kushner puts it, *Tron* was about "authoritarian government versus democratic government." There was real thematic weight underneath all the neon-tinged body suits and Amstrad-era graphics, and certainly no House of Mouse sing-along songs. Despite these thematic undercurrents, *Tron* is famed for its pioneering visuals and effects, and rightly so; they have been homaged, mocked and celebrated in popular culture extensively since they first perplexed audiences and are as distinctive now as they were back in 1982. Perhaps, not entirely unsurprisingly, they were not achieved without the spilling of some blood, sweat and tears, though, and there were even fears at the time that the film would not come off at all.

At the start of the Eighties, videogames were the all the craze and Steven Lisberger was no different to any other guy his age. *Space Invaders* and *Pong* had the young animator hooked and from then on he set about doing a movie that incorporated his passion. A script was written but after securing $5 million in independent funding Lisberger hit a wall when several major studios passed on the film, unconvinced that it was possible. Disney, though, took a gamble and coughed up $12 million for Lisberger, a first time director, to put into the practice the CG/live-action/back-lit hybrid he envisaged to tell his tale of the young ENCOM computer programmer, Kevin Flynn. Flynn is betrayed by fellow programmer Dillinger, who steals his game designs and passes them off as his own. In order to find the evidence that proves they were his, Flynn, along with friends Lora and Alan, break into the ENCOM HQ. The Master Control Program – a self-aware program written for the purpose of doing good but which has become rather full of itself – scans Flynn out of existence and dumps him in the virtual world of its mainframe, where he must fight to survive and escape back to the real world. To be expected, bringing this all to life on the silver screen was no small feat.

"In animation you can work on your own pace," Lisberger recalls, "but live-action is a performance piece, it's like capturing lightning in a bottle and it took me a while to adjust." To help him, Lisberger surrounded himself with the best, signing up legendary futurist Syd Mead, who would go on to work on Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*, and French comic book artist Jean 'Moebius' Giraud. Mead designed the light cycles, Sark's (Dillinger's in-computer program counterpart) carrier, the tanks and the film's logo, and Moebius the costume and sets. "It turned out that the combination of the two [Mead and Moebius] was beautiful," Lisberger says of the pair's involvement. "Syd is so futuristic and so stylish and Moebius's artwork is so spiritual and charming, between the two it felt right."

Just as important to the film's success though was the casting of the actors. As Flynn, Lisberger hired Bridges, a young actor whose enthusiasm for the project was evident from the off. "It was risky, and chancy," Bridges recalls of his motivations for taking on the film, "but it was a chance to do something new, so I got on board." To play Tron, Alan's corresponding 'program', Lisberger hired Bruce Boxleitner, an actor known for his work in westerns, and who "had a hard time envisaging himself as a videogame hero in a Disney movie," according to his director. Barnard Hughes joined as Dr Walter Gibb, Cindy





Jeff Bridges apparently had to wear a dance belt to cover up his 'bulge'.

TRON-TASTIC!

The best scenes that 1982 CG offered

1 A BRAVE NEW WORLD

Only when audiences sat down in the theatre for the first time could *Tron* show them what movies were really capable of, and it did so with this hyper-kinetic, 'what's going on?', virtual world, light-cycle scene as Clu infiltrates the Master Control Program. Remember Bullet Time, the T-1000, Spielberg's dinos? This was one of those moments.

Clu, Flynn's program counterpart inside the ENCOM system, was named after a programming language of the same name.

2 HONEY, I SHRUNK FLYNN!

After breaking into ENCOM, Flynn tries to hack into the system, with the MCP retaliating by focusing the laser on him that Lora Baines and Walter Gibbs had been developing and then, hey presto, it's "goodbye real world, hello virtual one", as he's zapped to pieces and reconstituted inside the mainframe, light-cycles and all.

The ENCOM laser bay is actually the target bay for the 20-beam Shiva laser facility at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

3 THE RING LEADERS

Rather than squaring off against gladiators in the coliseum, *Tron* pitted Bridges' Flynn against another program in a 'last man standing' bout that was heavily influenced by the prototype arcade *Pong*, as the contestants tossed a ball towards their opponent, the ground disappearing in rings where it bounced.

Lisberger has been greatly influenced by the onset of videogames and had wanted to develop a film incorporating them.

4 LIGHT CYCLE ESCAPE

With Ram and Tron in tow, Flynn makes a break for freedom on a light cycle as the MCP's Recognisers move in for the kill. A hyper kinetic sequence that sent jaws-dropping in 1981, it is the scene for which the film is most famed – deservedly so too – and which formed the basis for the teaser trailer/test footage for *Tron Legacy*.

The riders are enclosed in their light cycles because the initial idea – they 'fuse' with their cycles – proved too costly.

5 TIME LAPSE LA

Back in the real world, Lisberger closes the film with a stunning time-lapse shot of Los Angeles from the ENCOM rooftop. As day becomes night, the light from the cars of the City of Angels leave trails similar to those of the light cycles, neatly drawing a comparison between the future that lies in store and the virtual world of *Tron*.

During the filming of the exterior ENCOM scenes, radioactive spillage contaminated actress Cindy Morgan's shoes.

Yori is introduced to the "user" concept of a kiss.

Morgan as Lora, and David Warner, of *The Omen* fame, signed up to play Dillinger. Yet the actor who met such a famous end in Richard Donner's demonic blockbuster was not the first choice for the role, as producer Kushner explains: "Peter O'Toole was going to play the part and he'd read the script… and he came out to the studio and was disappointed to discover it was all going to be put in in post-production." Unable to comprehend what Lisberger was attempting, he dropped out.

The shoot itself was no walk in the park. Actors talking about the trouble of working with CG-greenscreen is now commonplace, tennis balls on the end of sticks substituting for Jurassic monsters, or alien beasts in a galaxy far, far away, but for the cast of *Tron* it was a new type of screen acting, a practice much more akin to the limited sets and imagination-driven environment of the stage. "You never knew if you were over-acting or under-acting," Bridges remembers of the shoot, which he found demanding.

"WE'D GO AWAY, SHUT THE DOOR AND JUST GO 'THERE'S SO MUCH THAT HAS TO BE PULLED TOGETHER!'"

LISBERGER LOOKS BACK ON THE POST-PRODUCTION PROCESS

The sets and costumes did little to help them visualise the world they would end up immersed in. Shot entirely in black and white (the neon colours were added in post-production), the actors would spend all day in a monochrome environment before emerging at the end of a day's work into the Technicolor Californian sun. "We were encouraged to wear bright, colourful clothes," Bridges says of his non-costume workday attire. "At the end of the day we'd go outside and be bombarded by colour!"

Once the filming was done, the arduous post-production process began, with no fewer than 500 people involved. "There were times when the studio asked us 'Is it all going to come together?' and we'd say, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah,' but then we'd go away, shut the door and just go 'there's *so* much that has to be pulled together!'" Lisberger remembers.

TRON TITTERS

Moments which have not aged as gracefully…

A look at some of our favourite Tron scenes that haven't quite stood the test of time…

"INOPERATIVE DATA PUSHERS"

"This town's full of live ones," Flynn notes and he's not far wrong. Coming across like ENCOM's lo-fi virtual Mos Eisley, Flynn walks past the inoperative data pushers, a collection of strange and odd programs, the trouble being that rather than a cast of legions, the production could only afford to have a few characters milling about.

Although *Tron* was an initial failure, the videogame based on it out-grossed the film.

DUMONT BOBBLE-HEAD

Bobble heads of your favourite sci-fi characters are one thing; life-size bobble head characters *in* your fave films are quite another, and that's certainly how Dumont comes across in *Tron*, with Dr Walter Gibb's program counterpart unveiled with a disconcerting wobbling head costume.

Many Disney animators refused to work on the film, as they feared that the CG techniques would put them out of a job.

SOLAR SAILOR SCRAP

With Tron and Yori on the Sailor, the MCP sends some goons after them only for Tron to dispatch them with amusing ease. One-by-one he takes them on and sends them packing, as they tumble and fall from the Solar Sailor, with little threat posed, to their demise below.

British rock group Supertramp were to contribute to the soundtrack, but previous commitments prevented them from doing so.

Sark/Dillinger is a merciless and evil villain.

The CG effects really were groundbreaking at the time.

Actor Dan Shor (program Ram) only became aware of the painstaking process of combining the elements after he was accosted on an LA street by a crew member who told him he hated his nose. Why? Because he had spent the year colouring it in frame-by-frame. With each shot in the film a composite of different processes, there can be anything from 5 to 25 different layers on the screen at any one time, the number of personnel swelling to bring down the initial estimate of a month of post-production time per minute of completed film. The light cycle sequences alone posed a gigantic task with 600 co-ordinates required to plot the cycles' movements throughout just four seconds of the movie. And these co-ordinates had to be entered, one-by-one, by hand.

The work paid off, though, and *Tron* emerged in 1982 to confound audiences; with the public accustomed to 2D games, *Tron*'s 3D depictions beggared belief, and then placing real actors in these was incomprehensible. *Tron* marked a seismic shift in the way effects movies were made. However, although it recouped its budget, the film wasn't universally embraced, and it was refused Oscar Nominations for its effects work on the grounds that using computers was 'cheating'. "If there was any miscalculation," Disney Chairman Dick Cook reminisces of the film, "it was where the world was at the time. If *Tron* had come out in 1990 it would have been one of the biggest movies of all time." With *Tron Legacy* – a Lisberger-produced sequel touted as equally as 'game-changing' as its processor – released in 2010, the series fell slightly short in its second chance to claim this accolade.

TRON is available on Blu-ray from Disney Pictures

LISBERGER'S LEGACY

Steven Lisberger began his career in animation and he founded his own company Lisberger Studios. The first work the company undertook was producing an hour-long *Animalympics* to be broadcast alongside the coverage of the 1980 Olympics. The first 'Winter' segment was broadcast but the second was shelved after the summer games in Moscow were boycotted.

Lisberger's desire to push forward into new frontiers saw him uproot his Boston-based company for LA, where he focused on bringing his pet project *Tron* to the big screen. After *Tron* he directed two more films – the Mark Hamill-starring sci-fi *Slipstream* and John Cusack comedy *Hot Pursuit* – before leaving the director's chair. He returned as a producer for *Tron Legacy*, which came out in 2010.

Why is Tron a Modern Classic?

1. Light cycles
Light cycles, have we mentioned them at all yet? The film's definitive light cycles, in the science-fiction encyclopaedia of greatest machines ever invented, are up there with X-Wings, hoverboards and Off-World Spinners.

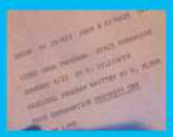
2. The future starts here
It paved the way for future filmmakers and effects artists to attempt the impossible, and, with its visionary CG techniques, heralded a new dawn in the way effects were achieved.

3. The Legacy
Because, almost 30 years later, a sequel is in production (the longest gap between original and sequel in Hollywood history), but rather than ditching the original's design and revamping the visuals, *Tron Legacy* has opted to keep the same layered, mainframe reaching to the horizon design. And it's kept the light cycles too.

4. The Dude!
With the cavalier effects and CG-grandstanding, *Tron* needed an enigmatic performance to anchor the story, to provide its beating heart and take the viewer on the emotional journey, and it has this in Jeff Bridges.

5. The underdog triumphs
Disney usually had the cutesy films but with *Tron* the tables were turned, as it was Disney that had the cutting edge film (which was pitted against the opposition's cutesy *E.T.*). This was down to its creator Lisberger. *Tron*, and light cycles (remember?) were his idea and it was his energy and creative drive that saw them come to fruition. A lesson for today's contemporaries to heed.

PRINT OUT EVIDENCE



After infiltrating ENCOM and finding the proof that it was he and not competing programmer Dillinger that designed the videogames, he is rewarded with a neat – too neat – little print out which basically says exactly that: "Flynn – good, Dillinger – bad." As far as evidence goes, it's about as handy as they come.

The print out was originally a much longer document, but it was simplified so the audience would understand its implications.

EIGHTIES COOL

No mention of the Eighties would be complete with at least some reference to the fashions of the time, in this case it has to be Flynn's red-sleeved jacket. Despite the current resurgence in Eighties fashions, this jacket is still a shocker and manages the quite impressive feat of looking more dated than some of the movie's nascent CG techniques.

Jeff Bridges could often be found on the arcade machines Lisberger had littered round the set.

"BLADE RUNNER FOUND AN AUDIENCE THAT WOULD VINDICATE SCOTT'S VISION, LIFTING THE MOVIE FROM A NICHE FILM TO A TRUE CLASSIC THAT WOULD INFORM AND INFLUENCE THE GENRE FOREVER MORE"

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO... BLADE RUNNER

Overblown budget, director fired from the set, sullen actors and crew rebellion; Blade Runner is a textbook definition of what Hollywood calls 'a troubled shoot'. Here we take a look back at the difficult birth of what would become a true sci-fi classic

The history of *Blade Runner* is a long one; its development began in 1968, shortly after the first publication of Philip K Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep*, with director Martin Scorsese expressing an interest in adapting the book. According to Philip K Dick himself, speaking to *Starlog* magazine, Scorsese wanted to make the movie but in the end didn't option it for development. A further attempt at adapting *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?* occurred in 1973 when producer Herb Jaffe optioned it and handed it to screenwriter Robert Jaffe.

When Dick saw the screenplay adaptation by Jaffe, he was less than impressed. "I said to him then that it was so bad that I wanted to know if he wanted me to beat him up there at the airport or wait till we got to my apartment," he told *Starlog*. Dick tried to make suggestions for improvements but in the end gave up when he noticed that Robert Jaffe was pretending to take notes with his pencil "a quarter of an inch from a piece of paper that already had printing on it".

It wouldn't be until 1975 that another adaptation would be attempted. Writer Hampton Fancher came to Hollywood with an aim to get into the movies. After a number of failed attempts, a break came in the form of friend Brian Kelly. Kelly loaned Fancher $5,000 to option *Androids* for adaptation; it was a book that Fancher didn't particularly like but he saw it as a pure moneymaking opportunity and did it anyway.

Fancher's initial script was on a much smaller scale, taking place in a single room and very dialogue heavy. After completing this draft, Kelly got involved again, approaching EMI producer Michael Deeley with the draft.

Initially Deeley was unimpressed and turned the draft down flat, but Kelly was undeterred, returning to Fancher and asking for further redrafts to present to Deeley. It was after the eighth draft – which focused on themes within the book Fancher empathised with, such as the death of animals and their extinction from a dying polluted world – that Deeley finally saw potential and in 1977, he optioned the script for development.

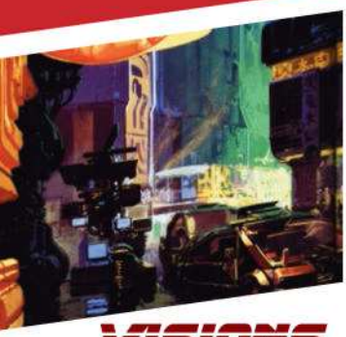
Initially the script was entitled *Mechismo* by Fancher, based on his love for a comic of the same name with a look that was very influential during the writing of the approved script. This, though, was soon nixed by Deeley who felt that the title *Dangerous Days* was more evocative of the more romantic elements to the story.

Once the script was settled, Deeley knew exactly who he wanted to direct *Dangerous Days*, his fellow EMI colleague Ridley Scott. Scott at the time was finalising his latest film, *Alien*, when Deeley approached him with the script. Initially the director turned it down, not keen to be involved with another sci-fi movie so soon after *Alien* and with an existing commitment to make Dino De Laurentiis's adaptation of *Dune*.

Scott spent six long months on a protracted pre-production period for *Dune*, when sadly his elder brother Frank died of cancer – something that was to prove to be a catalyst for Scott. His brother's death caused him to drop the meandering *Dune* production in favour of something already underway that he could throw himself at and focus on.

At this point friend and assistant producer Ivor Powell suggested that Scott re-read the latest *Dangerous Days* script, forwarded to them

This sci-fi noir presented a dauntingly dystopic future, fraught with melancholic drama.



VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

The influential futurist Syd Mead

While many concept artists and visual effects technicians worked on *Blade Runner*, few are as synonymous with the film's look as concept artist Syd Mead. Mead had previously worked as an industrial designer for Ford and later as an illustrator on *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*.

The designer began working on *Blade Runner* when Ridley Scott, scouring books for reference, found Mead's book *The Sentinel*. "A lot of the art in *The Sentinel* was a bit too futuristic," explained Scott, "but from his photographic, specific style and the other elements I could already see in his art, I had a feeling [he] would be able to pull back on his 'Flash Gordon' tendencies..."

With a love of sci-fi and strong background in engineering, Mead was a perfect choice to work on *Blade Runner*. Initially hired to design the Spinner police car, as he worked on the designs Mead would illustrate street scene backgrounds for the Spinner to sit in. These excited Scott, as Mead's backgrounds perfectly captured Scott's idea of 'retrofitting'. Scott collaborated with the designer, who began working on all aspects of the production. "I eventually assumed broader responsibilities," Mead explained, "I wound up creating props, street scenes and buildings." The result was one of the most meticulously detailed and realistic environments committed to film. After *Blade Runner*, Mead would work on such sci-fi classics as *Tron* and *Aliens*, yet Scott's movie remains Mead's true showpiece.

Roy Batty may have been a replicant, but the emergence of emotions within him provided a complicated twist.

Deckard was the best in the business before he retired.

BLADE RUNNER TRIVIA

Philip K Dick's ideal choice for the role of Rachael (which went to Sean Young) was *Dallas* star Victoria Principal.

by Deeley. Scott reappraised the script with his new perspective and envisioned the screenplay as a Forties-style film noir detective story and promptly called Deeley. Within 24 hours of speaking with Deeley and assessing how far along the project was, Scott joined the production on 21 February 1980.

With a script and hot directing talent on board, Deeley sought out a financing studio, eventually settling with Filmways Pictures. Filmways, a relatively small studio, was only able to commit to a budget of $13 million, something that Ridley Scott felt was wholly unrealistic. "I told Filmways very early on that the $13 million production floor wasn't very realistic in terms of what I had in mind for the picture." Scott explained, "That figure was then raised to a pledge of $15 million. But by my estimates our final costs would be close to the $20 million mark." Despite the lower than expected budget, work began on the construction of the sets and a shoot date of 12 January 1981 was booked with a release date set for Christmas 1981.

As soon as Filmways committed to the project, Deeley had his lawyers draw up a short-term company comprising of Scott, Hampton Fancher, Ivor Powell, Katy Haber and Deeley himself. The company, called Brighton Productions, set up shop in LA on one of the oldest studios in Hollywood, Sunset-Gower Studios. *Blade Runner* would be the first film shot by Scott in the US.

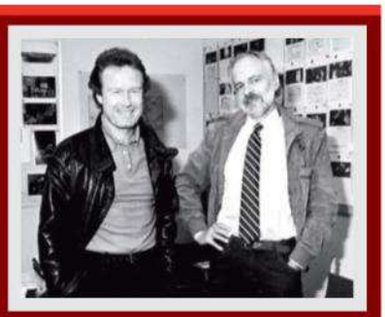
By April 1980, work began on finalising and finessing Fancher's script; this would prove to be the start of many interpersonal problems that beset the *Blade Runner*

IT'S NOT AN EASY THING TO MEET YOUR MAKER

Philip K Dick and Blade Runner

Like everything relating to the production, Philip K Dick's experience with *Blade Runner* was tumultuous. After the initial failed attempt to make *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep*, Dick lacked faith in any of his work being adapted properly. Dick's distrust of Hollywood grew when he learnt of a new production of *Sheep*, yet none of the production staff had spoken to him. After many phone calls to the production office, Dick acquired two drafts of Fancher's script and was less than impressed. "It was just one terrible script. Corny, extremely maladroit throughout. In my opinion it was doubly negative. I did not approve of what it tried to do, and I don't think it accomplished what it tried to do. In other words, they aimed low and failed at what they aimed at."

Things got worse for the production when Dick, still feeling ignored, took action, denouncing the film as "Philip Marlowe meets *The Stepford Wives*" in the then highly influential magazine *Select TV*. He then mailed the article to *Blade Runner* producer Michael Deeley. The effect was immediate. The next time Dick spoke to the studio asking for a copy of the latest script by David Peoples, they sent it straight over. The author viewed Peoples' script favourably: "Peoples transformed the *Blade Runner* screenplay into a beautiful, symmetrical reinforcement of my work." Ridley Scott later invited Dick to view a 20-minute effects reel that astounded the author, who asked Scott and effects supervisor Douglas Trumbull, "How'd you



guys do that? How did you know what I was feeling and thinking?!" After the screening Dick and Scott buried the hatchet with a frank discussion, which transformed the author from cynic to true believer. Dick confessed to the *LA Times* that he was "like a kid on Christmas Eve" when it came to his anticipation of seeing the finished movie. Sadly, Dick died after a major stroke and heart attack on 2 March 1982 four months before *Blade Runner*'s release.

DENIZENS OF DYSTOPIA

The human and nearly human inhabitants of LA 2019

Rick Deckard
The 'human' hero of the film, Deckard is an ex-Blade Runner drafted back into service to deal with the escaped replicants when one of them, Leon, shoots another Blade Runner, Holden. Depending on which version of the film you believe, Deckard may or may not be a replicant himself.

Roy Batty
A combat model replicant, Roy Batty is the leader of the renegade group of Nexus 6 replicants. The 'prodigal son' of Eldon Tyrell, Batty seeks his creator to gain more life. Ultimately, his short life and newly emerging emotions result in Batty becoming the most human character in the film.

Rachael
A new form of replicant, with no four-year life span, Rachael was created by Eldon Tyrell, who theorised that replicants' inability to control their emotions actually came from their lack of experience. Implanted with the memories of Tyrell's niece, Rachael is unaware she is even a replicant.

Leon Kowalski
A manual labour replicant, Leon lacks the intellect of his friend, Roy Batty. Leon's immaturity leads to him clinging to memories in the form of photos and this combination of low intelligence and newly emerging emotions results in Leon being quick to anger and move to violence. Which is probably why he was so quick to shoot Blade Runner Holden.

JF Sebastian
A genetics designer working for the Tyrell Corporation, Sebastian was unable to move off world due to his genetic condition 'Methuselah Syndrome'. The 'accelerated decrepitude' symptoms gave Sebastian much in common with the Nexus 6s he designed, who expertly manipulate the lonely scientist into helping them infiltrate Tyrell Corporation.

Pris
A pleasure model replicant (ironically with a Valentine's Day Incept Date), Pris is the girlfriend of Roy Batty, though whether or not this is genuine love or an example of new emotional growth is never explained. Pris is an expert at manipulation and has military functions built in too.

Zhora
A replicant trained in assassination, euphemistically referred to as 'political homicide' on her replicant data sheet. Zhora is an expert in hand-to-hand combat, as Deckard discovers directly. After escaping with the other Nexus 6s she hid in plain sight as an exotic snake dancer at the Taffy Lewis bar.

Dr Eldon Tyrell
The head of the mega corporation that bears his name, Eldon Tyrell is the genius behind replicants and their use – some are given away free to off-world colonists. Part businessman, part slave driver, Tyrell is a modern day Prometheus with a lack of morality about his creations.

Gaff
An origami-making Blade Runner working for Captain Bryant, Gaff's main role is to find and bring Deckard in. Speaking a slang language called Cityspeak, a combination of Hungarian, French, Chinese, German, Korean and Japanese, the enigmatic Blade Runner shows some compassion, refusing to retire Rachael after she goes rogue.

Captain Harry Bryant
The borderline racist chief of Los Angeles Rep-Detect department, Captain Bryant is a manipulative man. He's not beyond using thinly veiled threats to get what he wants, in this case, his top Blade Runner back on the case after Holden is shot and left for dead by Leon.

Holden
Considered by Captain Bryant to be the best Blade Runner on the force after Deckard, Holden was brought in by Tyrell Corporation after receiving news of the Nexus 6 off-world mutiny. Holden's job was to test all new Tyrell employees to detect any replicants trying to infiltrate the company.

Hannibal Chew
Another Tyrell Corporation geneticist, Chew is another link in the chain for the replicants seeking to meet their maker. Chew specialises in eyes, having designed the eyes of the Nexus 6 replicant line. Chew works in his own lab emporium, perhaps unsurprisingly called Eye World.

BLADE RUNNER TRIVIA
The visuals on the screen of Gaff's Spinner after he picks up Deckard are the same as those on the Nostromo in *Alien*.

Edward James Olmos went on to star in another sci-fi classic, *Battlestar Galactica*.

production. Initially Fancher found Scott's involvement with the evolution of the script very stimulating and challenging. Scott spent time picking over the minutiae of the script, asking Fancher questions such as "Why the f*ck are [the replicants] on Earth?" or the famously oblique question "What's outside the window?" referring to the city as a whole, rather than simply a scene within the film itself. These and many other questions forced Fancher to re-evaluate many elements in the story and even resulted in key elements such as the replicants' four-year life span and Deckard becoming a Blade Runner rather than being referred to as a detective.

The term Blade Runner – taken from William S Burroughs' book *Blade Runner: A Movie* – used by Fancher was initially a big hit with Scott, who promptly re-titled the film from *Dangerous Days*. However, after a while he cooled to the idea and considered *Blade Runner* a working title, opting instead for the film's title to be *Gotham City*, until he discovered its relation to Batman.

With the financing in place and a script almost finalised, thoughts turned to casting. Opinion on who should play Deckard was split; Scott had envisioned Dustin Hoffman for the role, while Hampton had written the role for Robert Mitchum. Scott brought Hoffman on board and for a few months everyone felt the film had its leading man. However, Hoffman's involvement was short-lived and the actor would leave the production in October 1980. "Frankly, I think it might have been something as simple as money," explained Scott. Though in an interview with Paul Sammon, Deeley shed more light on Hoffman's departure. "Dustin was trying to change the basic content of the story into a more socially conscious picture," he revealed. "None of us really wanted to see the picture pushed in that direction." Yet, with shooting less than a few months away, the production still lacked a leading man. Eventually this problem was solved when Scott and Deeley were invited by an enthusiastic Steven Spielberg to view the rushes for *Raiders Of The Lost Ark* and its leading man Harrison Ford.

BLADE RUNNER TRIVIA

At one point the film was going to be set in San Angeles, inferring that LA and San Francisco had merged into one.

TIME... TO DIE

We look back at Roy Batty's final soliloquy

"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I've watched C-Beams glitter in the dark at the Tannhauser Gate. All those moments will be lost in time. Like tears in the rain." Roy Batty's last words drill to the heart of *Blade Runner*'s core theme of the nature of humanity and the brevity of life. It's an oft-quoted urban legend that Rutger Hauer improvised the whole thing. In fact, the speech was written by David Peoples and was half a page of dialogue. Elements such as C-Beams and Tanhauser Gate all came from Peoples. Hauer's input was some judicious pruning of the script. "So I said to Ridley... 'This is way too long, if the batteries go, this guy goes. He has no time to say goodbye, except maybe to talk about the things he's seen. "Life is short" – Boom!' I truly felt that the ending of this picture should be done quickly." Hauer explained, "So when we filmed that speech, I cut a bit out of the opening and improvised the closing lines: 'All those moments will be lost in time. Like tears in the rain. Time to die.'" The result was a powerful scene that is rightly regarded not only as one of the all-time classics of sci-fi but of modern cinema.

Meanwhile script re-writes continued and tensions began to rise. Scott, who had not actually read the source novel, disliked Fancher's more fanciful story elements and continually complained that for a detective, Deckard actually did not do any detecting. According to Michael Deeley, "Hampton saw *Blade Runner* as a romantic morality play; Ridley wanted a harder edge." Eventually the creative differences between the writer and director reached critical mass. Feeling he had already done way too much rewriting on the script, Fancher became more intractable and less accommodating. Believing he held a position of power as one of the film's producers as well as its writer, he dug his heels in against any further rewrites. "Things had gotten to the point where I'd basically said, 'You don't like this? Then fire me!'" Fancher recalled in an interview with Paul Sammon, "It was a dare, really. I thought my position was secure. What an idiot."

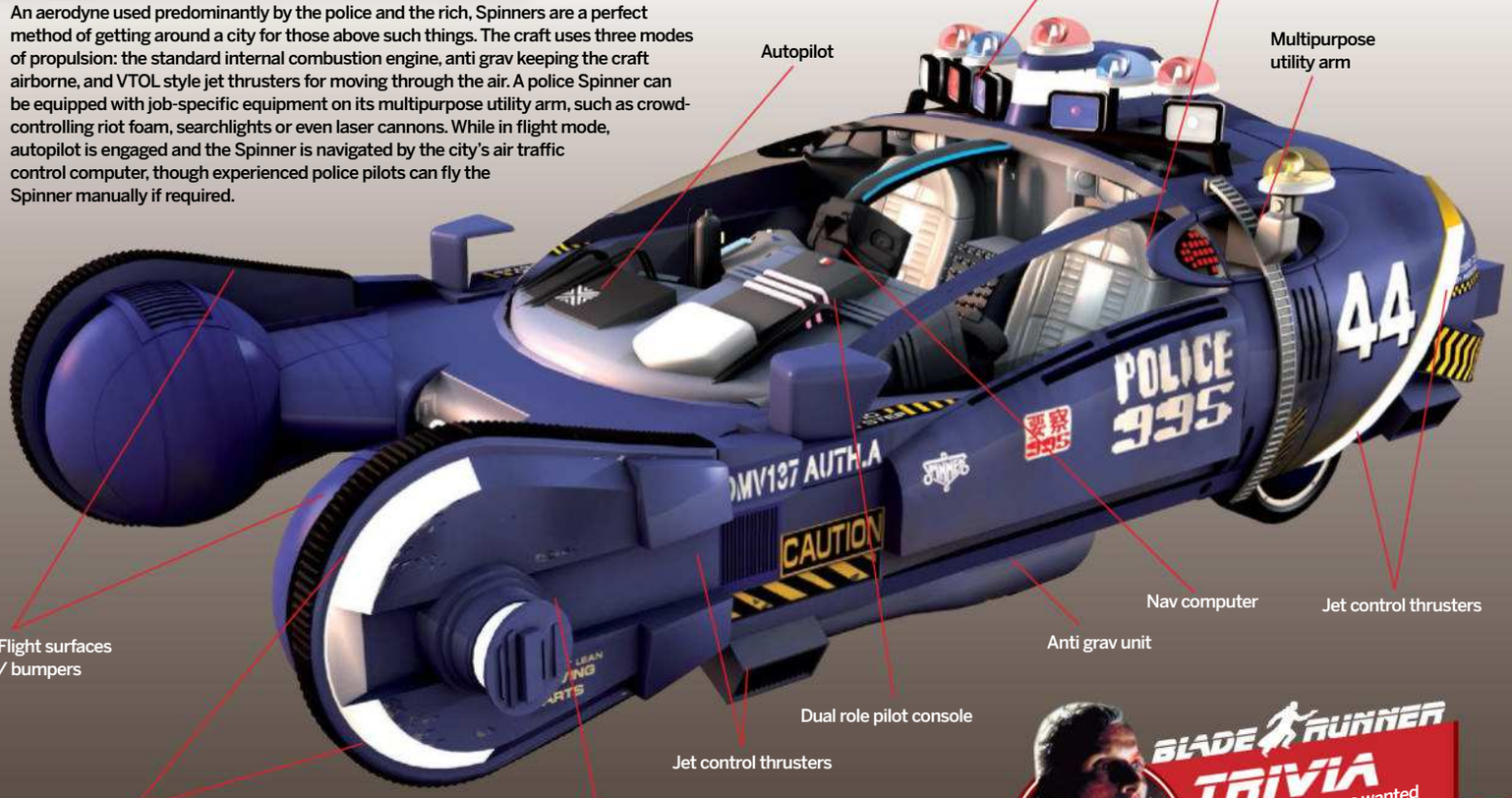
Indeed, while Fancher believed himself indispensable, Scott and Deeley had other ideas, calling the writer's bluff. The pair met a writer (recommended by Scott's brother) called David Peoples in November 1980. The writer was hired to make the changes to the script that Fancher would not. It was something Peoples found initially hard to do, feeling that the script Fancher had written was excellent in its own right already. Peoples was told by Scott to avoid Dick's source novel, feeling it would be better if he just concentrated on what Fancher had written only. So over the next month Peoples worked on a new draft with the required changes and on 15 December 1980 the script was delivered. The new script incorporated the detecting elements Scott was after, including the discovery of the snake scale scene, which leads Deckard to Animoid Row. Additionally the Peoples script replaced the term 'android' with 'replicant' – the term replicant was coined by Peoples' daughter, a biochemist, who told her father about a process called replicating, used to duplicate cells during cloning.

By the time Peoples' first draft arrived, the crew had already begun assembly of the massive sets, and a huge effects team – led by special effects legend Douglas Trumbull and designer Syd Mead – had started preliminary work on the film's crucial visuals. The effects work alone was going to burn through the budget quickly and before a single set had been finished, the crew had spent over $2.5 million. This made what happened next doubly disastrous. With mere weeks to go before principal shooting commenced, Filmways – which was suffering 'financial instability' – got cold feet and pulled out, taking its financing with it. This move had the potential to sink the production and Brighton Productions suddenly found itself with no money to pay the crew. Something needed to be done and quickly. Deeley and the rest of the production staff assembled a presentation package of art and stills to lure in new investment. Deeley spoke to every major studio who would listen and finally managed to keep the film alive with a canny three-way deal involving The Ladd Company, a Far East movie producer Sir Run Run Shaw and a TV production company called Tandem Productions.

OUT FOR A SPIN

We look at the iconic flying car of Blade Runner, The Spinner

An aerodyne used predominantly by the police and the rich, Spinners are a perfect method of getting around a city for those above such things. The craft uses three modes of propulsion: the standard internal combustion engine, anti grav keeping the craft airborne, and VTOL style jet thrusters for moving through the air. A police Spinner can be equipped with job-specific equipment on its multipurpose utility arm, such as crowd-controlling riot foam, searchlights or even laser cannons. While in flight mode, autopilot is engaged and the Spinner is navigated by the city's air traffic control computer, though experienced police pilots can fly the Spinner manually if required.



Spinner 3D model by Sean Kennedy. Image by Lee Medcalf

BLADE RUNNER TRIVIA

Tandem Productions wanted no credits written down but Harrison Ford narrating them over a shot of rain.

THE CULT OF BLADE RUNNER

Upon its release, critics and audiences panned Blade Runner. So how did it get the recognition it deserved?

Initially *Blade Runner*'s revival began with a growing vocal core of fans keeping it alive by word of mouth. However, it was the new home video and cable TV technologies that would be the key players in saving *Blade Runner*. With both media outlets craving content, Warner Bros. – keen to recoup costs from the failed box office performance – pulled *Blade Runner* from theatrical release and premiered the film on its newly formed cable channel in 1982. After this, Embassy Entertainment released the film on VHS and Laserdisc in early 1983.

Both the cable run and home video release generated a new audience for the film. Home video allowed viewers confused by the plots to revisit and reappraise the film at their own pace. The fan base grew with the new technology and after its release on home video, *Blade Runner* became one of the most rented videos ever.

As time went on the cult grew and a new generation of filmmakers began drawing influence from *Blade Runner*'s visuals, name checking the film in interviews, further growing awareness of the film. Moreover, *Blade Runner* became the visual Rosetta Stone for a growing sub-genre in literary sci-fi. Cyberpunk shared similar themes and aesthetics as *Blade Runner*, further cementing the film in the public consciousness. By the early Nineties, *Blade Runner* had undergone a major critical reappraisal, being widely regarded as one of the true classics of science fiction.

The stunning visuals and cityscapes gave us a breathtaking image of the future

BLADE RUNNER TRIVIA

To get the replicants' shining eyes, Scott used Fritz Lang's 'Shifting Process', bouncing light into the eye with a mirror.

Is this intrepid replicant hunter actually going after his own kind?

BLADE RUNNER TRIVIA

In the scene when Deckard finds a snake scale in the bath, Deckard is played by Ford's stunt double Vic Armstrong.

BLADE RUNNER AND BEYOND

Further adventures in 2019

Blade Runner The Video Game (1985)
Released in 1985 on all 8-bit platforms, this lacklustre game was bizarrely based on the music of Vangelis due to licensing issues with the film rights. Baring little relation to the film, the player had to earn money by running down sideways scrolling crowded streets shooting replicants in the back.

Blade Runner The Video Game (1997)
The second *Blade Runner* videogame was a multi-threaded point-and-click adventure. The story ran parallel to the events in the movie. You play Ray McCoy, a Blade Runner hunting a different group of replicants in LA. Several members of the original cast reprised their roles for the game.

Blade Runner 2: The Edge Of Human
The first of three *Blade Runner* sequel novels written by KW Jeter, *Edge Of Human* continued the movie's story as Deckard attempts to keep Rachael alive past her four-year life span, only to be drawn back to Los Angeles by Tyrell Corporation to finish his original job and retire the sixth replicant.

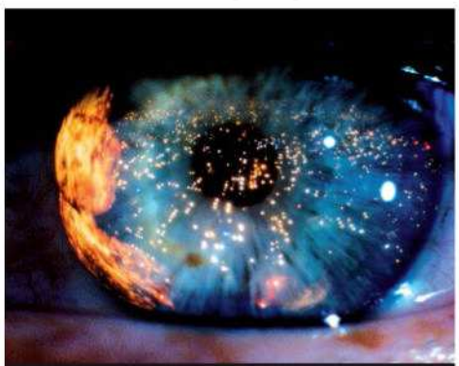
Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep comic miniseries
Due for release by Boom! Studios later this year, this 24-issue miniseries is a faithful adaptation of Philip K Dick's book. However, the art by Tony Parker ironically adopts the visual style of the film Dick's book inspired.

Each company paid an equal share of $7.5 million towards the budget, with Tandem also acting as completion bond guarantors, making them liable for any budget overspend.

At last filming could begin, but things were anything but smooth sailing from the start. Almost as soon as the filming got underway on 9 March 1981, Scott became a driven and focused man, concentrating on creating the perfect visuals for his film. This obsession for perfection often meant many repeat takes of the same shot, something that made Bud Yorkin and Jerry Perenchio of Tandem Productions nervous. Every repeated shot meant more money spent, money which they were ultimately responsible for should the production exceed its budget. It wasn't long before Tandem Productions was badgering Scott and Deeley over every dime spent. Another downside to Scott's pursuit of the perfect shot was the toll on the actors, especially Harrison Ford.

Scott and Ford initially had a cordial relationship on set, but over time Ford and Scott fell out, with the director and actor barely speaking to one another by the time the filming wrapped. Ford saw Scott's approach as uncaring and cold, while a preoccupied Scott barely noticed, causing Ford to complain he was only there to give focus to the sets. The conditions on those sets did little to alleviate Ford's mood either. "It was a bitch," he confessed, "working every night all night long, often in the rain so it wasn't the most pleasant shoot." Ford's mood did not improve when it came to working with his co-actors either, especially Sean Young who played Rachael. Young was an inexperienced actress and *Blade Runner* was her first feature. Producer Katy Haber believed it was this inexperience that caused the rift between Young and Ford. "I think the reason there was friction between Sean and Harrison was clashing personalities. You also have to remember Harrison was a consummate professional, and here he was working with someone very green. That couldn't have been easy for him, given the other stresses Harrison was under."

Ford wasn't the only one under stress and exhausted by the shoot. The crew also felt animosity towards their overly critical and intensely focused director. "We worked like hell to get the street set right," explained art director David Snyder. "We must have bought every piece of pipe, plastic, steel and wood in a 5,000 mile radius. [Then the] day came to show it to Ridley. Larry [Paull] and I were standing there – shaking of course – when Ridley drove into the backlot… He got out of the car, looked around, took [a] cigar out of his mouth, and said, 'That's a great start', then he got back in his car and drove off. Larry and I stood there in complete silence for five minutes and then said, 'What the f*ck are we going to do now?'" The dispirited crew began to call the production 'Blood Runner' and their displeasure with conditions and Scott himself was ever growing.



Blade Runner focused on what it means to be human.

BLADE RUNNER TRIVIA
Deckard was going to wear a fedora in the movie, but Scott changed his mind after seeing Ford's *Indy* costume.

Rick Deckard has gone on to become a genuine icon of the genre.

Meanwhile, Scott had other problems. On 11 July 1981 an increasingly nervous Tandem Pictures fired Scott and Deeley from the film. Despite this, the pair returned to the set two weeks later and continued to work on the picture. Arguing that Tandem needed him to finish the film and direct the effects work, Scott continued to work on set but now Tandem had the control, causing further battles over story elements, including the oft-mentioned Unicorn sequence, the maligned voiceover, and the inclusion of a happy ending. By the time production wrapped the budget had ballooned to $28 million and many crewmembers vowed never to work on movies again.

The bad news didn't end there, however. Test screenings of *Blade Runner* were almost universally bad, with many audience members complaining about the slow pace, dark tone and the confusing story. The film went through multiple re-edits and test screenings until it was released 25 June 1982 to a critical mauling. 1982 would be the year of such classics as *The Thing*, *Wrath Of Khan* and, of course, *E.T.*; against such huge movies, *Blade Runner* suffered a massive defeat at the box office, grossing only $14 million in its initial run. It was a flop destined to always be reviled. However, it would be years later, with its appearance on home video and the dawn of cyberpunk, that *Blade Runner* would be rediscovered by a more open-minded audience. An audience that would vindicate Scott's vision, lifting the movie from a niche cult film to a true touchstone classic that would influence the genre forever more. But what will we see from the sequel that enters production 2016?

The **BLADE RUNNER 30TH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION** boxset is available on Blu-ray from Warner Brothers Studios

Which version is which?

There have been many versions of *Blade Runner* since its initial release. Do you wonder which one is for you? Wonder no more with this SciFiNow cut out and keep guide to the various versions.

	Work-print version	US theatrical version	International version	US TV broadcast version	Director's Cut version	Final Cut version
How long is it?	113 mins	116 mins	117 mins	114 mins	116 mins	117 mins
Is there an opening crawl?	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Is there a Unicorn?	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Is Deckard a replicant?	✗	✗	✗	✗	Probably	✓
Is there a bored voiceover?	✗ – apart from brief narration at the end	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Is there a happy ending nicked from outtakes of *The Shining*?	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Extra violence / gory Tyrell death	✓	✗	✓	Absolutely not... not even swearing	✗	✓

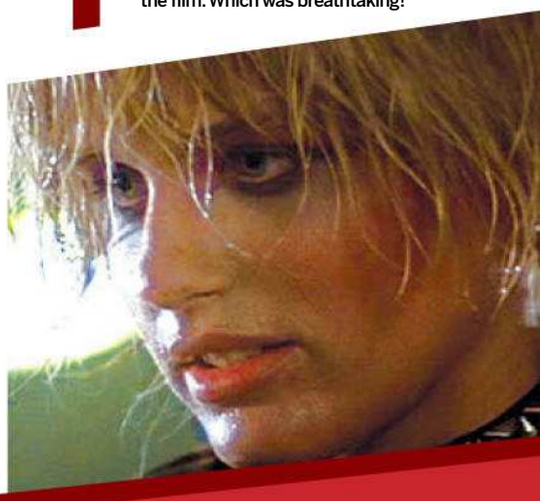
THE SOUNDS OF THE CITY

The iconic soundscape of Vangelis

With hindsight, it's hard to imagine *Blade Runner* without the evocatively melancholic soundtrack created by Evangelos Odysseas Papathanassiou, aka Vangelis. Yet it was not as cut and dried as you would suspect. "I never thought we were going to use Vangelis to start with," confessed supervising editor Terry Rawlings. Indeed, Jerry Goldsmith, who had worked on Scott's *Alien*, was initially in the frame.

It was Ridley Scott who decided to use the Greek composer. Scott invited him to a screening of a first assembly cut of the film. *Blade Runner* impressed the composer so much that he confessed to Scott that the movie both terrified and thrilled him.

Inspired by the noir-ish aspects of the film, as well as the "chillingly plausible future", Vangelis settled on a musical mood that *Blade Runner* historian Paul M Sammon described, in his book *Future Noir*, as "futuristic nostalgia". The soundtrack became as iconic as the visuals, though it was not without its share of issues. Vangelis was not fast and would not only compose, arrange and produce the music, he would also perform it. This slowed the scoring process down immensely. "He couldn't seem to find the time to do the score," explained producer Michael Deeley. In the end, though, it's the result that mattered, as Deeley admitted: "The important thing was the music he contributed to the film. Which was breathtaking!"



BATMAN

IT WASN'T THAT NOBODY BELIEVED A BATMAN MOVIE COULD BE DONE WITHOUT BEING CAMP; MORE THAT THEY DIDN'T THINK A SUPERHERO MOVIE COULD BE DONE WITHOUT BEING CAMP. STARS MICHAEL KEATON AND JACK NICHOLSON, DIRECTOR TIM BURTON AND OTHERS RECALL THE TRIALS, TRIBULATIONS AND THE ORIGIN STORY BEHIND THE FIRST MODERN SUPERHERO FILM…

Fandom fairly exploded when Ben Affleck was announced as Batman/Bruce Wayne in 2016's follow-up to *Man Of Steel*. But that response was relatively sedate compared to the one greeting the news that actor Michael Keaton – Mr Mom himself – had been cast in the role for Tim Burton's 1989 version. And that news, in turn, was nothing compared to what *would* have happened if producers Jon Peters and Peter Guber's original plans had been brought to fruition.

"There was only one other actor that we really wanted, which was Bill Murray," explains Peters, who paused to let that one sink in for a minute. "At one point we played with the idea of Bill Murray and Eddie Murphy playing Batman and Robin. Peter and I had done a lot of movies, and many began in concept as party jokes. Batman was always something that we really wanted to do, and we worked on it for a long time. The idea of Bill Murray set the tone for the movie in the sense that we wanted someone who had a comedic sensibility, but also had a dark side and an explosive side, which most comics do, especially Bill Murray. Not until we saw *Beetlejuice* did we realise that this guy who played Mr Mom had a ferocious side and was completely, unbelievably explosive. That's when we started zeroing in. There was a mention of all kinds of other actors to play Batman, and every agent in Hollywood would call us, but Peter and I hung in there until we met with Michael."

Bottom line: they were right. 25 years ago, Batmania swept the world in much the same way it had back in the Sixties with the Adam West-starring television series, although this wave was decidedly darker, more adult and grittier. It saw Keaton far surpassing expectations in the dual role of Bruce Wayne and Batman; Jack Nicholson owning the part of the Joker (until Heath Ledger came along, of course) and did away with the Sixties stigma that had dogged the character for decades. There wasn't a 'POW!' or 'BLAM!' in sight.

"This is not the TV show," executive producer Michael Uslan proclaimed. "It's completely different, because it is true to the comics. This is the story of Batman, the creature of the night who stalks criminals in the shadows. This is his first battle with the Joker. It's a wonderful, original, unique and stylish film, and one that will not only thrill [then] 50 years worth of Batman fans, but the general public as well."

> "MICHAEL KEATON BROUGHT A FRESHNESS TO THE ROLE – IN OTHER WORDS, HE KNEW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT IT"
> TIM BURTON

At the beginning of the Eighties, Uslan and his partner, Benjamin Melnicker, acquired the rights to the character from Warner Bros/DC for what must have been a sweet deal (they have executive-produced every *Batman* film since) and began working with screenwriter Tom Mankiewicz to bring him to life on the big screen. Mankiewicz, of course, was the final writer on Richard Donner's *Superman: The Movie*, and had penned several James Bond films. As such, he seemed like a natural fit, although those efforts never developed beyond the script stage.

"When we did the original screenplay," said Peters, "we paid Tom Mankiewicz $750,000 to write the first draft, then about seven drafts later we realised it never really worked. It was like *Superman;* it was derivative. It wasn't original, it wasn't different, it wasn't unique. We'd seen it already. Not until Sam Hamm did this version, which was darker, more extreme and aggressive, and saw Batman as a ferocious fighter, did we start to understand the direction we wanted the film to go in."

Leading them down that path was the success of Frank Miller's seminal comic-book miniseries of the time, *The Dark Knight Returns,* which returned the character to his roots in a way that was shocking, yet appropriate.

"We started putting this project together brick by brick," explained Melniker, "and here we are. When Tim Burton joined the project, he really started shaping the film to his liking, and I think a fascinating balance has been struck in the final draft. It's a wonderful piece of work and a wonderful blueprint from which to work."

Added Peters, "The script is like a blueprint, and not until you start to build and shape it do you really understand what you've got. By the time we were finished, the evolution of Batman was complete, as was the uniqueness, design and originality we always wanted to do. How we were going to get there we weren't exactly sure."

Burton was certainly a guiding hand, although he admitted that he had not been a huge fan of the character in the comics.

"The reason I got involved," he said, "not being a giant comic-book fan and growing up more with the series, is that I was attracted to the images. Somehow it just strikes very primal images – Batman, the

which are very primal and great creatures. Any time you show people a bat, something perks up. I think they're very beautifully designed creatures and interesting. It's something that just strikes a very primal chord. I don't even know what that is, but I know that's why I was attracted. There was no other reason I would be. I feel more like a detached, normal person in my approach to the characters, than veering from one side, which is the comic-book, and the other side, which is the TV series."

Prior to being cast in the film, Keaton had worked with Burton on Beetlejuice, but had not yet received critical acclaim from his performance in the drama *Clean And Sober*, which is what made his casting so controversial. For his part, he was essentially unfamiliar with the character.

"I do know that even before this movie, there was a kind of a swell of a wave about Batman," Keaton offered. "I'm sure I was probably a year late noticing it. I noticed this Batman thing happening, then Tim [Burton] talks to me about this movie, and while we're doing it, the wave just kept building and building, and then cresting. Beyond that, I wanted to work with Tim again. He can get you to do things on a film. Sometimes, I get ideas where I want to push things out to their limit, and generally speaking I have an ally in Tim, because he's willing to go further out. I'm not even talking about just for unusual sake, but trying something different, and that makes me comfortable. To put it simply, I'd worked with him on *Beetlejuice* and enjoyed the experience, and wanted to do something with him again, and *Batman* came up."

"Michael," Burton interjected, "brought a freshness to the role. In other words, he knew absolutely nothing about it."

"That's absolutely true," Keaton concurred, "because I chose that way, and also I didn't think I had time to come up with anything. I decided early on, 'I'm not going to start going through comic-books and stuff; I just don't want to work that way. I want this man to stand on his own.' One thing I did, though, was think I should go right back to the source: bats. So I actually read a little bit about bats for a while. I checked them out and tried to learn about them. Back when Tim told me he wanted me to play the part, I was curious as to what the script was going to be about, so I read it and just read it as a script, as a movie, and just really liked it. I liked the script and the fact that Tim was doing it."

As for creating the dichotomy between Bruce Wayne and Batman, Keaton laughed, "I pretty much guessed. Seriously, what I did was go with the character as written. I said, 'OK, forget he's Batman. Let's say he's a sumo wrestler. Let's say he's a jeweler. Look at what he's about and what he does and says.' I started working from the script and found what I found, which was that this was a very interesting guy to play. Then you say, 'This is a man who decided to put on a bat suit at night and go out and seek justice.' That made it even more interesting. That really made it very interesting, and I talked about my impression of it with Tim. Tim told me what he was thinking, then I laid down the real basics of what he is and what he isn't, to start with. After that, I was mostly following Tim and going with my instinct."

> "WE PLAYED WITH THE IDEA OF BILL MURRAY AND EDDIE MURPHY PLAYING BATMAN AND ROBIN"
> JON PETERS

Pointed out Burton, "The good thing about the script is that Sam Hamm, more than Michael or myself, is a comic-book fan. So he wrote it very clearly with that in mind. It wasn't like we were all sitting around going, 'What are we going to do with this?' It was clearly delineated and true to the spirit of the character."

The other side of the coin, so to speak, was the casting of the Joker, with Jack Nicholson ultimately being chosen. Explained Peters, "Jack heard about the project for the first time with me in Boston on *The Witches Of Eastwick*. It was about 4am when we were preparing for a church sequence, and he was saying to me, 'I signed on to play the Devil, but I don't want to throw up on all these people, because it will ruin my career.' 'Jack, this is part of the character, you'll be wonderful. And just to get

Michael Keaton went against type to great effect as Bruce Wayne.

Tim Burton was the first director to attempt to sincerely replicate the comic-book universe.

Before *The Dark Knight*, Jack Nicholson was the definitive Joker.

THE BAT SUIT

Tim Burton and Michael Keaton on creating the iconic costume

Michael Keaton remembered when he first saw the world of *Batman* come to physical life. "I was amazed by all of these folks over there [in England] who build sets, created special effects, did wardrobe," he said. "I saw the costume and thought, 'Yes!' That was actually a question I had: what would I look like? Then I saw it.

"Tim said, 'I'm thinking of going with armour, because on the television series he just happens to elude bullets; his luck isn't that good,'" Keaton added with a laugh. "Tim said he wanted to do armour, and I asked him to show me. He started to show me sketches – he's visual, so he gets things. And I'm relatively visual, so I get things, not quite as clearly, but I saw it. Then they did a bodycast and started going from there, and the end results were pretty amazing."

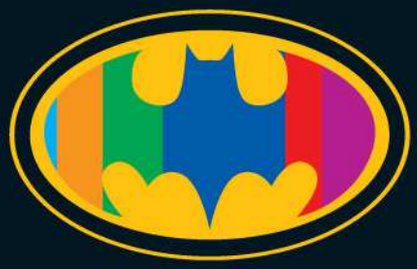
"TIM SAID HE WANTED TO DO ARMOUR"

"A lot of that had to do with Bob Greenwood, because he's the best costume designer," enthused Burton. "The key people – him, production designer Anton Furst, director of photography Roger Pratt – got into one theme, which is that you take a human being and make him something else. You make him Batman. Even though we don't get into the psychology, everybody went with that premise. I mean, he's a guy who dresses up as a bat. What can you say about that?"

Kim Basinger provides the love interest as Vicki Vale.

COPIED CRUSADERS

Which comics had the largest impact on Tim Burton's Batman?



THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS #1-#4 4%

Writer: Frank Miller
Artist: Frank Miller
Published: February-June 1986
Released in the run-up to *Batman, The Dark Knight Returns* might have contributed the to the title of Burton's sequel, but all it really lent to the first film was a grim tone and a few little nods.

BATMAN: THE KILLING JOKE 18%

Writer: Alan Moore
Artist: Brian Bolland
Published: March 1988
As a character study of the Joker, Moore and Bolland's *The Killing Joke* is incomparable and Tim Burton was said to have carried around a copy of the book on set. Though the circumstances differ, many Joker/Vicki Vale scenes echo those between the Joker and Barbara Gordon.

BATMAN #386 11%

Writer: Doug Moesch
Artist: Tom Mandrake
Published: August 1985
The often overlooked tragedy of Jack Napier's moll Alicia Hunt is obviously cribbed from Black Mask's girlfriend Circe. A vain model who lives in an apartment filled with her own portraits, when Black Mask is disfigured, he scars her with toxic cosmetics - forcing her to don an expressionless white mask.

DETECTIVE COMICS #27 14%

Writer: Bill Finger
Artist: Bob Kane
Published: May 1939
Batman's debut appearance foiling a heist at a chemical factory where a crim falls into a vat of noxious goo gets bundled in with the Joker's origin story for Tim Burton's movie.

DETECTIVE COMICS #439 16%

Writer: Steve Englehart
Artist: Marshall Rogers
Published: March 1971
Cited as a direct inspiration for Batman's opening scene, 'The Night Of The Stalker' puts the dark back in Dark Knight by showing him from the perspective of the criminal he's pursuing, all ominous shadows and threatening silence.

DETECTIVE COMICS #469-#476 37%

Writer: Steve Englehart
Artist: Marshall Rogers
Published: May 1977-April 1978
Steve Englehart was approach to write an early treatment for Tim Burton's *Batman* and the framework of Englehart and Rogers' run is still obvious - love interest Silver St Cloud becomes the earlier love interest Vicki Vale, mobster Boss Thorne becomes Carl Grissom and the newly maniacal Joker with his Joker-fied trail of corpses... well, he stays the same.

This Gotham was authentically grimy and lived in.

"THE DANGER OF A COMIC-BOOK MOVIE IS YOU DON'T WANT TO START SAYING THINGS LIKE, 'I'M AVENGING THE DEATH OF MY PARENTS'" TIM BURTON

your mind off of it, let me tell you about this movie we're doing, *Batman*.' So it began about two years [earlier]." Enthused Uslan, "And Jack Nicholson is ideal as the Joker. It's like God created him for this role."

"You know, with Michael as Batman, we wanted you to care for him as a human being," said Peters. "We wanted you to feel for him. We had another problem with Jack, because we had to be careful not to like him too much. This guy could shoot you and laugh at you, and you love him. We wanted a story that basically had some warmth to it. We were trying to make a real movie, not just a *Lethal Weapon* or something."

Smiled Burton, "For me, there's a certain kind of joy when both Jack and Michael come onto the set knowing their characters, and then it's fun after that. You get a scene five different ways and come up with new things on the spot, but it's always a strong framework we're working in. Both of them know so much, and Jack just knows so much about filmmaking and can take any absurd thing and make it real. That sort of person is a real spark to me.

"But the tricky thing about these characters," he added, "is how you analyse a split personality. Nobody knows. Here, you're dealing with those issues in a comic-book movie, so you're really laden with trouble. So what we tried to do was give it a real short-hand sense of psychology. Be true to the spirit of it and leave it open to interpretation. The danger of a comic-book movie is you don't want to start saying things like, 'I'm avenging the death of my parents' or 'There's a bat in the my window. Now there's an idea.' We tried to avoid that and actually leave things a bit more open, therefore taking some of the edge off of the conventions of seeing a balloon come out of Michael's mouth saying, 'I'll get you!'"

A major problem that had to be dealt with during production was the sense of propriety fans were trying exert over the project, and the media backlash they were creating in the process. Keaton, for one, said he was unaffected – which was particularly true in those pre-internet days.

"I was never aware of their feeling of propriety, so I was never hurt by it," he said. "Then we went to England to shoot the film, where we didn't have to deal with it, which was a big bonus. It was nice to be there, because when you're away, it's about doing the movie, not all the external things, which turned out to be a blessing. So a lot of this stuff was going on while I was over there, and when I got back I started catching up on it. By that time I just found it pretty amazing and funny. I guess if I'd had a real vested opinion about it one way or the other then that would have been hard, because then I could argue with it. I didn't have to do that because, basically, I had no knowledge."

Peters did, however, and both he and Guber realised that they had to do something to turn around the uninformed opinions. "I didn't intentionally try to think of a way to please the fans, I just figured that I'm a fighter, I had 90 fights as a fighter, I'm an aggressive guy, I'm a rough guy in Hollywood, so to speak" he detailed. "I knew how to make a movie with a guy who could kick ass, and I believed that Michael Keaton could kick ass. So I believed if we made the movie we wanted to make, ultimately people would discover what we discovered. But I don't think I realised the depth and intensity of the Bat-fanatic all over the country.

"While we were shooting the movie," Peters continued, "the *Wall Street Journal* came out with this article where they absolutely, completely crucified us and did some research about Bat-conventions all over the United States where they were booing the concept of Michael Keaton, and were really feeling that we were bastardising the movie. These were very aggressive people. Peter Guber, Mark Canton [from Warner Bros] and I went into the editing room. We didn't tell Tim or Michael anything. They were making the movie, and if they started to read all this stuff, how were they supposed to make the movie? We had Jack Nicholson, one of America's great actors, playing a guy who smiles all the time. That's a big risk. He could embarrass himself. You've got Michael Keaton in a cape!

"In any event, we cut together a trailer, which became a famous trailer, and we took it back to America. There's was no narrative, no music, no names of who anyone was; just footage from the film. We put it in theatres, and it basically changed the direction of the perception of the movie and really got people on our side."

Pointed out Uslan, "Afterwards, there were a number of major stories in the media done *about* the trailer, and I don't think that had ever happened before in movie history."

For Keaton, the importance of the whole thing hit him when he returned to the US from filming. "The first thing that happened," he said, "when I got off the plane from London is some guy from the airline said, 'Good luck with the movie.' I said, 'It went great,' without knowing what movie he was talking about. Then I realised that the movie was *Batman*. So it was the first thing anybody said to me when I had gotten back, and I quickly realised that something amazing was happening."

BATMAN is available now on Blu-ray from Warner Brothers

EXPLODING EFFECTS, HOSPITALISED CREWMEMBERS, ARCTIC WEATHER CONDITIONS – THE THING HAD A DISTINCTLY TRAUMATIC JOURNEY TO THE BIG SCREEN. THE RESULT OF ALL THE BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS THAT WERE SHED, THOUGH, IS ONE OF THE MOST HORRIFYING SCIENCE-FICTION MOVIES EVER TO GRACE CINEMA SCREENS

THE THING

Film

104 mins // 1982
Director John Carpenter
Cast Kurt Russell, Wilford Brimley, TK Carter, David Clennon, Keith David, Charles Hallahan, Peter Maloney, Richard Masur, Donald Moffat, Joel Polis

About

Written by Bill Lancaster and directed by John Carpenter, principal photography on *The Thing* began on 24 August 1981, with shooting taking place on location in Alaska and on soundstages in Los Angeles. With a budget of $10 million, the film was the biggest that Carpenter had attempted, however, upon its release in June 1982 – the same day that Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* was released and only two weeks after Spielberg's *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial* had hit – it stuttered at the box office. It has since, though, found a loyal following on video and on cable television, and latterly on DVD, and stands today as a bona fide sci-fi and horror classic.

John Carpenter first met Rob Bottin when the latter, a budding effects artist who had worked on the Roger Corman flick *Rock 'N' Roll High School* and Joe Dante's *Piranha*, burst in on him during a meeting and pitched him for a role in *The Fog*. Bottin's bravado paid off and not only did he work on *The Fog*'s ghost effects, but Carpenter cast him as Blake, the vengeful spirit who causes all the carnage in the first place. It was while working together on the film, though, that Carpenter revealed to the young effects artist what he had in mind for his next movie. "You're gonna remake *The Thing*?" Bottin replied, slightly stunned when the *Halloween* director laid down his plans to remake Howard Hawks's Fifties classic *The Thing From Another World*. "Yep," Carpenter responded, "and I want *you* to make The Thing!"

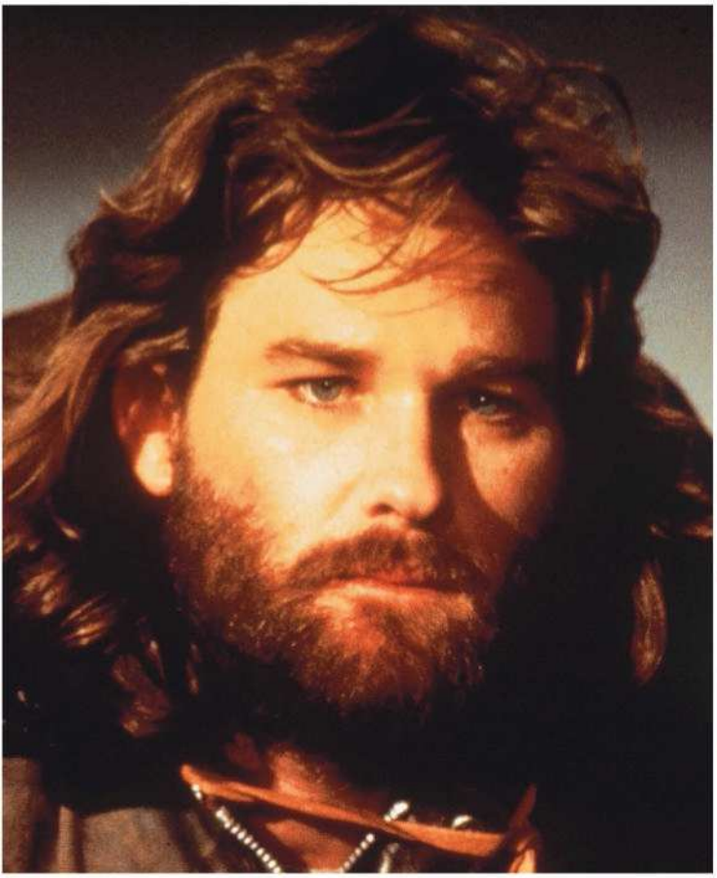
Carpenter and Bottin's second collaboration was to become that most rare of movies though, a remake which actually surpasses the original. A claustrophobic thriller, an icky horror movie, a special effects spectacle – John Carpenter's *The Thing* is all of this and so much more and, with its evocation of the most primal of fears about the threat from within and its pertinent social and political allegories, it thoroughly deserves its place in the upper echelons of sci-fi's cinematic output.

Coming off the back of *Halloween*, *The Fog* and *Escape From New York*, Carpenter was riding high but *The Thing* would take the acclaimed director leaps and bounds beyond anything that he had attempted before. His first studio picture, his first film without long-time producing partner Debra Hill, and the first instalment in Carpenter's 'Apocalypse trilogy', which would be followed by *Prince Of Darkness* (1987) and *In The Mouth Of Madness* (1995), *The Thing* was bigger in every respect – bigger budget, bigger sets, extended location work – the only thing that wasn't bigger about it was the cast. A tale of a group of Antarctic-based research scientists who stumble upon a crashed alien spaceship and who encounter the shape-shifting creature that had been housed inside it, the movie's cast was small and decidedly ensemble in nature. Kurt Russell plays the lead, MacReady, and Carpenter and producer David Foster amassed an impressive roster of actors for the 'supporting' roles, however, the small cast and the enclosed nature of the setting and the film's premise was intrinsic to their view of what the film should be. "What attracted me to the piece was the characters, the ambience and the mood, and the enclosure and the elements of paranoia," screenplay writer Bill Lancaster reasons of the aspects of the project that appealed to him. Closer in tone to John W Campbell Jr's original novella, 'Who Goes There?', *The Thing* took its small enclosed setting and ratcheted up the tension as the creature proceeds to pick off the research scientists one by one, morphing into their shape and adopting their appearance. However, what made the film so powerful was the sense of claustrophobia and paranoia it evoked as the scientists eye each other with suspicion and turn on one another. Fortunately for the actors, though, they didn't have to look too far for inspiration, as the shooting conditions they were subjected to, and the stresses and endurance tests Carpenter and the production thrust upon them, forced them into a real-life situation that mirrored that of their on-screen counterparts.

Carpenter had begun work on *The Thing* right after he had completed *Escape From New York* and it was the longest pre-production he had ever experienced. Shooting took place both on a Universal soundstage in Los Angeles as well as in Alaska, however, nothing could prepare the director, or the cast and crew, for the challenges posed by shooting in such an inhospitable location. "The conditions were unimaginable for shooting a movie," the horror legend recalls. "We had such problems right the way down to the cameras, which we had to leave out in the cold otherwise the lenses would mist up. The whole approach was just one of trying to push this giant rock up a mountain." However, the shooting in LA was not without its complications and posed a different kind of problem altogether for the production. In order to accurately convey the Antarctic setting of the film, and in particular to ensure that breath was always visible from the actors

"A CLAUSTROPHOBIC THRILLER, AN ICKY HORROR MOVIE, A SPECIAL EFFECTS SPECTACLE – THE THING IS ALL OF THIS"

Kurt Russell as RJ MacReady, alien battler extraordinaire.



The Thing is a truly frightening piece of sci-fi horror cinema.

Set in the Antarctic, the film was shot in Alaska as well as on a refrigerated soundstage in Hollywood.

SHAPE-SHIFTING EXCELLENCE

The Thing delivers classic scenes by the bucketload. Here's a look at just a handful of the very best blood-splattered specimens

CANINE KENNEL

The atmosphere has been established and Carpenter and scriptwriter Bill Lancaster have sucked the audience in with such aplomb that our first glimpse of The Thing in the dog kennel is a shock to the system. The visceral nature of its bloody attack on the arctic-bound canines though, only hints at the horrors that lie in store.

The effects shot of The Thing, the dogs, and the beast they become, was made by Stan Winston.

SPIDER-HEAD

Norris's head stretches off from his body, falls off the table, pulls itself across the floor by its tongue and then sprouts spider legs and walks away. As if this ground-breaking effects set piece wasn't enough, it is then saddled with one of the best lines in cinema as Palmer deadpans: "You have gotta be fucking kidding!"

Tobe Hooper worked on the script for some time but his work was not used in the final film.

BLOOD TEST

The scene where MacReady tests the blood of the team members for evidence of whether or not they are an alien-infected beasty is one hell of a tense piece of cinema. Garry's "I'd rather not spend the rest of the winter tied to this fucking couch!" line again demonstrates Lancaster's penchant for an aptly timed comic aside.

The blood test scene is one of many that Robert Rodriguez homaged in his 1996 film *The Faculty*.

WHO IS IT NOW?

There are only two left, MacReady and Childs, and with the burning remains of the compound surrounding them, they glare across the snow at one another, each suspicious of the other and The Thing that could be lurking within them. They acknowledge the futility of their predicament and... that's it, the credits roll.

Wary of how his downbeat ending would sit with audiences, Carpenter shot a 'happy ending' too.

OPERATION AMPUTATION

Months of preparation went up in flames, literally, in the shooting of the scene where Norris's chest bites the arms off Dr Copper, when a flame effect ignited fumes from the materials in the Norris prop. Cue starting again from scratch, just as well they did though, as it has became one of the film's standout scenes.

A mould of Dysart's face was worn by an actor who had lost his arms, with jello props added on.

Rob Bottin's pioneering effects work has stood the test of time.

The Thing boasts terrific performances from its ensemble cast.

"IT'S AN APOCALYPTIC MOVIE… THE THING HAS A LOT OF TRUTH IN IT DRESSED UP AS A MONSTER MOVIE" JOHN CARPENTER

mouths, Carpenter and his crew were forced to employ every available trick at their disposal.

"We decided that refrigerating the stages was really the best thing," cinematographer Dean Cundey remembers of the lengths he and the crew went to in order to ensure the level of authenticity they were aiming for. "We found out that it doesn't have to be really cold so long as the humidity is up and so it was a delicate balancing act of humidifying the air and bringing the temperature down."

This entire endeavour, though, was to take place in one of the hottest summers that LA has known and so the cast and crew laboured away in freezing temperatures on the set while the rest of the city was sizzling outside in 100-degree plus temperatures. Actors would get in costume and wrap up for shooting, then step out into the blazing sun wrapped up from head to toe. "We got so tired of changing to go to lunch," Richard Masur, who plays Clark, recalls, "that we'd just go down in our outfits in the brutal heat. Then for about three days I showed up every day with a ugly bullet hole in my forehead. I'd come in and go 'you're probably gonna want to put me in the corner so people don't have to look at me!'"

As hard as the shooting process was for the cast, it was nothing compared to the challenges that faced the special effects team, and it was upon their work that the movie's success hinged. "What I didn't want to end up with in this movie was a guy in a suit," Carpenter remembers of his worries for the creature itself. "I grew up watching science-fiction and monster movies and it was always a guy in a suit, or sometimes a bad puppet, and so my fear was that [the audience] would laugh at us. But when I saw some of the effects that Rob had created, I felt a great sense of relief."

Special effects ace Rob Bottin's ground-breaking work would become one of many aspects that would define the film, and it is his work which has ensured *The Thing*'s longevity. Boasting a sense of realism and a weight that even the very best CGI struggles to achieve, his creature effects earned plaudits aplenty on the film's release but it has only been in the intervening years that his work has been truly appreciated. "The interesting thing about *The Thing*, and the fact that it was a long time ago," Bottin considers of his contribution, "is that people actually think that the effects and the creature work hold up now, even in light of today's computer graphics."

Bottin's quite astounding work was supplemented by some gorgeous matte designs by visual effects artist legend Albert Whitlock, who had lent his talents to *Star Trek The Original Series* and Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*. Even effects guru Stan Winston chimed in with creature effects work for the dog kennel scene. "We came in at Rob's request," Winston explains of his team's involvement in the film, "because it was an overload period where he had some 7 million creature effects

OTHER THINGS

The Thing on page and screen

Do we need yet another remake of a John Carpenter film? Let us know what you think at **www.scifinow.co.uk/forum**

WHO GOES THERE?

John W Campbell Jr's novella 'Who Goes There?' formed the basis for the Fifties movie and Carpenter's film. It tells of a group of Arctic researchers who encounter an alien spacecraft in the ice and thaw out one of its occupants with terrible results.

It was voted one of the best science-fiction novellas ever written by the Science Fiction Writers of America.

THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD

This interpretation of Campbell Jr's novella capitalised on the anti-communist feelings brought on by McCarthyism. The creature was a Frankenstein-type beast rather than the shape-imitating beast of the source story, though.

Howard Hawks co-wrote and co-directed *The Thing From Another World*, though his efforts were uncredited at the time.

THE THING

Carpenter's film remains the most faithful adaptation of Campbell Jr's novella, right down to the creature's imitation of the body that it has assumed and the naming of key characters. Rob Bottin's effects are particularly astounding.

John Carpenter and Kurt Russell both claim that to this day they do not know who the creature has replaced in the final scene.

Along with *Halloween*, *The Thing* is a genre and Carpenter classic.

Charles Hallahan's Norris has just the worst day at the office.

going on and he talked to me about the possibility of picking up one of the effects." Winston's contribution aside though, the effects of *The Thing* belong to Bottin, a fact that the self-effacing Winston himself has been at pains to point out.

Despite the impressive effects work the film demonstrates, the role Lancaster's script plays in the formation of the final film is often overlooked. Eminently quotable, it throws up a plethora of lines that have become as recognised and beloved as Arnie's "I'll be back" in *Terminator 2* or Ripley's "Get away from her you bitch!" putdown to the alien queen in *Aliens*. Razor sharp and expertly paced, Lancaster's script is the basis on which Carpenter and the effects technicians were able to build, and the strength of the story and of the characters that populate it is largely down to him. Decidedly male-centric in its line-up (the only female in all of the cast and the crew was Adrienne Barbeau, Carpenter's wife, who supplied the voice of MacReady's chess computer), the role of the cast in *The Thing*'s success and the impact it has upon audiences is often underestimated too, despite the fact that the performances are all expertly judged and delivered with an impressive commitment to the cause. Indeed, for many of the actors, it is still the film with which they are most readily associated, as Charlie Hallahan, who plays Norris, explains of his infamous scene on the doctor's slab. "That sequence is so etched in the mind of people who see this movie," the actor considers, "that everywhere I've ever been, and I do a lot of travelling, someone comes up to me on the street and speaks to me about that movie and about that sequence in particular!"

A visceral experience that is unparalleled even now, and which has maintained its ability to truly shock and unsettle to this day, *The Thing* remains one of Carpenter's defining movies and, along with *Halloween*, is a genre classic that will retain this accolade for as long as movies exist. "It's an apocalyptic movie," Carpenter explains of the reasons for the film's longevity and continuing resonance with audiences. "There is a kind of sombre inevitability to the film; when it begins it already feels like the end of the world. The Thing, though, is a metaphor for whatever you want to say: it's disease, it could be AIDS, it could be whatever, it comes from within you. *The Thing* has a lot of truth in it dressed up as a monster movie." It is this truth which is the primary source of *The Thing*'s enduring appeal; in our world of terrorism and paranoia, it's a film that is just as relevant today, if not more so, than it was a quarter of a century ago when it was first released. This, in truth, is perhaps what makes it most terrifying.

THE THING (2011)

The 2011 film was a sequel to Carpenter's 1982 masterpiece. It followed a team of Norweigen and American scientists who discover an alien buried deep in the Antartic ice. It is based on Campbell's *Who Goes There?*

T ***The Thing* (2011) was the fourth remake of a John Carpenter movie. Just how many more are going to happen?**

THE THING is available on Blu-ray from Universal Studios

ROB BOTTIN – SPECIAL EFFECTS SUPREMO

Rob Bottin had previously worked on effects for *Piranha* and *The Howling*, among others, however, it was his work on *The Thing* that brought him widespread recognition. Only 20 years old at the time, Bottin threw his heart and soul into the production. "I wanted this stuff to come out so great that I virtually lived at Universal for a year and five weeks," he has recalled of his not insubstantial efforts. "I would sleep on the sets, I ended up working so hard that I ended up in hospital."

His efforts did not go unnoticed. "You'd walk into the model room and see what they were coming up with and it was incredible," Charlie Hallahan, aka Norris, recalls. US film critic Roger Ebert even hailed Bottin's effects work as "among the most elaborate, nauseating, and horrifying sights yet achieved by Hollywood's new generation of visual effects magicians."

Bottin has continued to break new ground in special effects, working on films such as *Robocop*, *Se7en* and *Fight Club*.

Why is The Thing a 'modern sci-fi classic'?

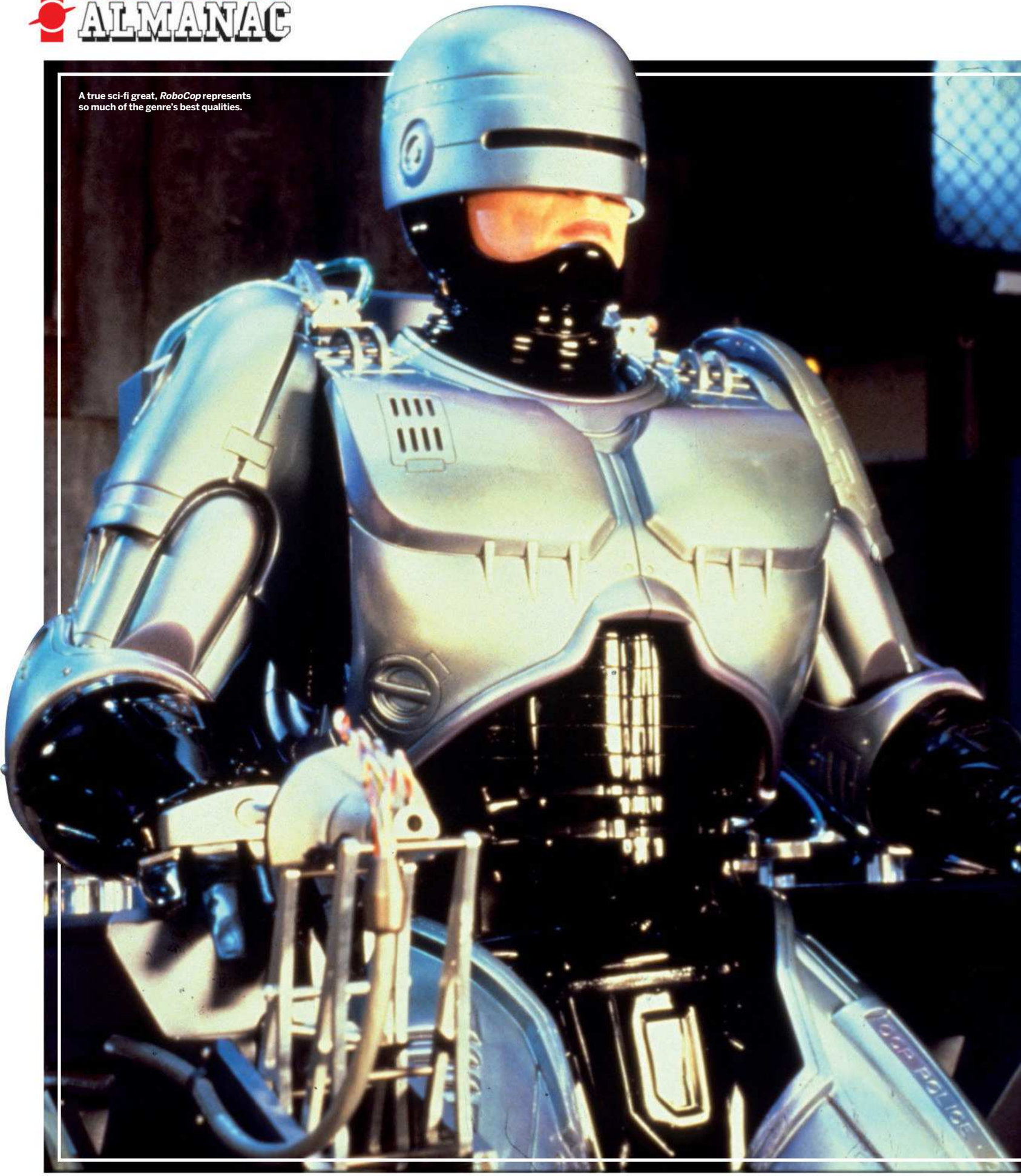
1 Special effects
Did we mention that *The Thing* has some pretty impressive effects? Just in case not, and you have been living under a rock, on Mars, with earplugs in, we'll say it again. Quite simply, Bottin's work is unparalleled.

2 Carpenter and Russell
The director and actor collaborated on no less than three bona fide genre classics in *The Thing*, *Escape From New York* and *Big Trouble In Little China*. Their separate output since, though, (*Vampires/ Poseidon*) has been less successful. The petition to get them back together starts here.

3 Body horror
The Thing embodies Eighties cinema's AIDS-infused penchant for body horror that had begun in the mid-Seventies with Cronenberg's *Shivers* and which came to full flesh-creeping fruition in the decade that style forgot with Cronenberg's *The Fly*, Sam Raimi's *The Evil Dead* and Clive Barker's *Hellraiser*.

4 MacReady's beard
His mullet and eye-patch in *Escape From New York* was surpassed not only by the mullet Mk 2 he sports in *The Thing* but also by the family of rather large furry animals he appears to have strapped to his face for the duration of the film.

5 Quotable dialogue
"I don't know what the hell is in there but it's weird, and it's pissed off!" *The Thing*'s masterful fusing of sci-fi shocks and horror scares with choicely scripted and expertly timed one-liners make it a classic that stands the test of repeat viewing.



A true sci-fi great, *RoboCop* represents so much of the genre's best qualities.

RoboCop

RoboCop became an iconic creation of the 1980s, spawning two sequels, an animated series, a pair of television franchises and all number of merchandise tie-ins. With a proposed remake mired in development hell, we look back at the legacy of Detroit's top lawman

Ah, the 1980s. Read Peter Biskind's seminal book *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls* and you will get the impression that it was a decade in which Hollywood began to populate the screens with big, boisterous, blockbusters – designed solely to swag in mucho moolah rather than to stimulate the brain. And, to be fair, the author has a point…

In comparison to the major studio releases of the Seventies (*A Clockwork Orange, The Godfather, Taxi Driver*), the Eighties saw the post-*Jaws/Star Wars/Close Encounters* boom in special effects-heavy genre projects positively explode. The result was an unmistakable slant towards Spielberg/Lucas-themed family fare – a factor that surely affected the commercial reception to more 'mature' movies (the saccharine sweet *E.T.* destroyed two of the decade's finest flicks – *The Thing* and *Blade Runner* – at the 1982 summer box office). So, as the era of Ronald Reagan, hair metal and Nintendo spiralled onwards, audiences were told that the future – perfectly in tune with what the White House was preaching economically – was just peachy. After all, the likes of *Back To The Future, Ghostbusters* and the *Indiana Jones* series (as good as they were) showed that brave Americans – of all ages – could, and would, overcome all obstacles placed in their way. Moreover, if Rambo could go back to Vietnam and win the war (as seen in 1985's *First Blood Part II*), and Harrison Ford could liberate Indian slave children (*The Temple Of Doom*) then things could not be better. Everyone was leaving the multiplex with a smile on their face, buying the relevant tie-in merchandise, feeling good about the stars and stripes and, well, who was going to complain about that? Trust that enfant terrible of Dutch cinema Mr Paul Verhoeven to put a spanner in the works…

Yes, prior to turning the sci-fi genre on its head with 1987's *RoboCop*, Verhoeven was courting controversy on the European art-house scene thanks to his rape and violence filled shocker *Spetters* (1980) and 1983's sexually explicit noir *The Fourth Man* (a dry run for his later *Basic Instinct*). Clearly, this was not a man who would be taking on a sequel to *E.T.* any time soon.

Arriving in Hollywood with a bad boy reputation, the filmmaker turned his attention to 1985's gritty fantasy epic *Flesh + Blood* before sinking his teeth into everyone's favourite copper – by way of a script penned by up-and-coming writers Edward Neumeier and Michael Miner. However, unlike the 'feel good' vibe that accompanied most US sci-fi features of the time (even John Carpenter had done a U-turn from the icy cynicism of *The Thing* into the more accessible, and successful, *Starman*), *RoboCop* – much like *Blade Runner* before it – painted a distinctly dystopian view of the future. It was the dark, and ultimately more realistic, side of Reagan's free market politics, with Detroit City's police department undergoing privatisation and the area's man power being overtaken by machine power (something that would soon happen for real, as seen in Michael Moore's Detroit documentary *Roger & Me*).

Meanwhile, in RoboCop's world, the corporate powers continue to sell junk television and needless consumer goods to the populace in a dire attempt to offer 'escapism' from the very real anarchy that has melted onto the streets. In the midst of this, of course, is Peter Weller as Officer Murphy – shot to pieces by a gang of hoodlums (led by Kurtwood Smith's perpetually stern-faced Clarence Boddicker) and reborn, Jesus-style, as the title character… a half human/half robot crime-fighter who the city's powers hope will bring 'salvation' to a lawless land. In the story, Weller's RoboCop, along with his female sidekick Officer Anne Lewis (played by De Palma regular Nancy Allen) must liberate the police force, owned by the multinational OCP Corporation, from ties to mobster pay-offs. However, RoboCop soon begins to have flashbacks to his mortal life of old – and those responsible for his untimely death.

"I am not a science fiction-fan at all," Verhoeven recently told Ain't It Cool News. "To tell you the truth, I hate science fiction," he continued. "The *RoboCop*-script was actually in my garbage-can when my wife persuaded me to take another look at it. There are three American films of mine that I really stand by: *RoboCop, Basic Instinct* and *Starship Troopers*. The rest were considerably worse."

ROBO-CURSE?

Think being part of a major film franchise will lead to fame and fortune? Think again! Here is the legacy of Detroit's most famous futuristic lawmen (and woman)…

PETER WELLER

Weller would follow up his *RoboCop* credentials with the flop monster mash *Leviathan* (1989) and Abel Ferrara's muddled *Cat Chaser*. In the wake of *RoboCop 2* was 1991's messy *Naked Lunch*, while 1995's space-caper *Screamers* bombed. After spending some of the Noughties studying for a PHD in Italian Renaissance Art History at UCLA, he won a recurring part in TV show *24* and will next be seen in the crime thriller *Once Fallen* (albeit fifth billed).

ROBERT JOHN BURKE

Having featured in 1992's cult favourite *Dust Devil*, Burke would use his turn in the much-hated *RoboCop 3* to, well, fade into obscurity. Unfortunately, the second actor to take on the tin-terminator would find it difficult to land another leading man role: 1996's *Thinner* gave him a brief reprieve before it was back to bit parts. Thankfully, recurring roles in television mainstays such as *Rescue Me*, *Law & Order* and *Gossip Girl* have secured him as a reliable character actor.

RICHARD EDEN

Filling the role of RoboCop in 1993's inaugural television series, Eden has uttered more mechanical dialogue than any other performer to wear the fabled futuristic attire. Alas low budget action flicks (such as 1996's *Public Enemies*) and television guest appearances (on the likes of *Earth: Final Conflict* and *Relic Hunter*) were what followed – albeit in large enough numbers to keep him busy. He most recently wrote and produced the upcoming horror opus *The Intervention*.

PAGE FLETCHER

The undersized actor was, arguably, the worst RoboCop of them all – and his turn in *Prime Directives* is fondly remembered by almost no one. Since then the thespian has only one more credit to his name: a major part in 2002's made-for-television crime-thriller *Haven't We Met Before?* He wins respect, however, for his command of the title role in the cult television series *The Hitchhiker*.

NANCY ALLEN

Allen rose to fame thanks to her turns in *Carrie*, *Dressed To Kill* and *Blow Out*. However, with the age-phobic Hollywood casting her out as she approached her forties, Allen would become a B-flick mainstay after her *RoboCop* reprieve. How else can you explain *Poltergeist III* or *Children Of The Corn 666*?

In the future, all USB connection will double up as lethal weapons.

ORION® Memories

The story behind the studio behind RoboCop

Orion Pictures was, at one time, a major player in Hollywood. Formed by some disgruntled former executives of the soon-to-go-under United Artists (which had become owned by the conglomerate Transamerica), the company would score its first major hit with the Dudley Moore sex-comedy *10* (1980) and also lay claim to the long-lasting television show *Cagney & Lacey*. Slapstick such as 1983's *Class*, 1986's twosome of *The Three Amigos* and *Back To School*, as well as 1989's *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*, provided more boffin box office, while 1984's *The Terminator* and *RoboCop* helped to establish Orion as a groundbreaking genre producer. Inevitably, the corporation was quick to look at ways to maximise the potential of both properties, with sequels pushed into development.

Things looked good critically too, with Academy Awards being thrown at the 1984 release of *Amadeus* and 1986's Vietnam War opus *Platoon* – while reliable franchise features such as 1982's *Amityville II: The Possession* (leading to 1983's *Amityville 3D*) and *Return Of The Living Dead* (beginning in 1985) kept the green ink flowing. Meanwhile the new decade got off to a shooting start with 1990's epic western *Dances With Wolves*. Considering such titanic titles as these, you would be hard pressed to understand why, come 1992, Orion would be in the bankruptcy courts, although the answer is actually quite simple… By producing 'auteur' driven vanity projects the company risked life and limb (this is the reason that few directors get carte blanche to recognise their visions nowadays).

Clearly not learning from the example set by United Artists (which staked its future on Michael Cimino's dull-as-dishwater, but super-expensive, historical flop *Heaven's Gate* and went bankrupt as a result), Orion gave *The Godfather*'s Francis Ford Coppola free reign on 1984's notoriously costly catastrophe *The Cotton Club*, which grossed less than 10 per cent of the $100 million it needed to break even. Other ill-advised Orion outings included 1988's ridiculously bad *E.T.* cash-in *Mac And Me*, the same year's *Erik The Viking* and 1990's *The Hot Spot* and action farce *Navy Seals* (which, along with *Heaven's Gate*, soon became a byword for big money bombs).

With that lot, plus *The Cotton Club* debacle, Orion was ordering in crate loads of red ink and even the multi-Academy Award success of *Dances With Wolves* and the sleeper horror smash *The Silence Of The Lambs* could not help the company. Declaring bankruptcy on 11 December 1991, Orion's 'major' 1992 slate of releases, which included *RoboCop 3* and George Romero's lavish *The Dark Half* were postponed indefinitely. Although both of these titles would finally see release

Few series offer the satire and set pieces that *RoboCop* does.

in 1993, to muted fanfare, Orion would not rise up from the grave (despite interest from New Line Cinema, who hoped to purchase the company and its back catalogue).

Currently, the production house's titles – including the flops – are available on DVD courtesy of MGM Entertainment. A somewhat sad, and ironic, end for a company that was instigated by a group of producers who wanted to remain independent from the Hollywood studio system.

Thankfully, Verhoeven demonstrated a natural shine for the material that he was given and *RoboCop* quickly joined the aforementioned *Blade Runner* as one of the first truly postmodern genre films. Firmly aware of its own politics and surroundings, the picture was a hard-hitting comic book satire that, as well as following an unmistakably left-wing agenda (the movie's producer, Jon Davison, has even frankly referred to it as "fascism for liberals"), boasted some jaw-dropping special effects. Brought in to oversee such technical trickery were Rob Bottin (then fresh from *The Howling* and *The Thing*) and stop-motion Oscar-winner Phil Tippett (whose credits include everything from *Star Wars* to creating Howard the Duck).

"*RoboCop* was a complete surprise to me," laughs Tippett when SciFiNow catches up with him. "The politics were evident in the original script but it was something that never leapt off the page or anything. So the wonderful significance of that film is that Paul snuck it all in without anyone ever noticing anything. I think that Paul's nomadic handling of the material brought a lot to the movie. I think in *Starship Troopers* it was even more obvious, which might be why he rates that, along with *RoboCop*, as one of his favourites." In an interview with the website The Jigsaw Lounge, however, Verhoeven argues otherwise. "A lot of what we could call the 'sociology' was already in the *RoboCop* script – it was something that the American writers brought in," he affirmed. "*RoboCop* is mostly about the idiocy of American television. These kind of people that flip-flop between extreme sadness, and fun, and a commercial. I always thought that *RoboCop* was my reaction to being thrown into American society, and looking around with wide eyes, thinking 'this is completely crazy.'"

> **"I hate sci-fi. RoboCop was in my garbage can when my wife persuaded me to take another look"** – Paul Verhoeven

Irregardless of who was responsible for *RoboCop*'s many symbolic moments (from the idea of an ultra-Christian, Reagan-era America having a new Christ figure to an entire workforce being made redundant by technology) the film made an indelible impression on both audiences and critics when it was released to cinemas. "I saw it at the first industry screening they held in Hollywood and I remember really responding to its veracity," states Fred Dekker, the man who would go on to helm the ill-fated *RoboCop 3*. "It was extremely pulpy and unapologetic about how broad and brash and kick-ass it was. Even though it was a popcorn movie you could tell it was special and it was going to become a classic."

An instant success, *RoboCop* demonstrated that an adult sci-fi feature need not merely imitate the body count agenda of the action genre (as the comparatively apolitical *The Terminator* and *Predator* had) and paved the way for such smart satires as 1988's twosome of *Alien Nation* and *They Live* and even 1992's gloom-ridden *Alien 3*. "I think *RoboCop* was definitely ahead of its time," adds Tippett – whose special effects obtained a BAFTA nomination. "Verhoeven was, and still is, a wonderful guy to work with; he would keep you very involved with everything – which is what a good director does with his effects team. He also gave you a lot of latitude in terms of what you could bring to the table and he was always very aware of the budget and what we could and could not do. It was a good relationship – and I also enjoyed working with Irvin Kershner when we went on to do *RoboCop 2*. He was another guy who had a firm grasp on visual effects and wanted the very best from you."

Released in 1990, *RoboCop 2* saw Kershner – who had obtained major hits with *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Never Say Never Again* – take over from Verhoeven in the director's chair. Unfortunately, the sequel – which was scripted by comic book writer Frank Miller and Walon Green (who would go on to pen the hit show *Law & Order*) – seems unsure of what it wants to be. Part of the reason for this may have something to do with the fact that, in 1988, a 13-part *RoboCop* cartoon series launched on American TV, bringing the character to an adolescent audience.

Created by Marvel Comics, the animated franchise was an odd choice – especially since Verhoeven's ultra-violent original movie was hardly kid-friendly. Yet, thanks to its success, it goes without saying that children were now an unavoidable hitch for any film follow-up. Consequently, *RoboCop 2* – which was rated R in the States (meaning any age could see it with parental accompaniment) – became 'blessed' with one of the oddest villains in screen history: a 12-year-old Drug Lord that swears, deals, carries a machine gun and watches live vivisections performed on prone policemen. Critic Roger Ebert called the concept "beneath contempt" and, when watched today, it makes *RoboCop 2* feel all the more grimy and unpleasant, especially since the second instalment ups the already colossal gore factor of its predecessor.

"I went to see *RoboCop 2* shortly after I took the gig to do *RoboCop 3* and it seemed to me that the filmmakers were fishing for the right tone," admits Dekker. "Verhoeven had created a tone that I have never felt before in a film since then – *Starship Troopers* notwithstanding. I thought that, especially in terms of the postmodern aspect, Kershner and Frank Miller were having a difficult time getting it right. To be honest, I found the first sequel quite caustic and needlessly violent, but in a way that wasn't balanced by the sense of humour which made the original really work. But then I came in to do the third one… The elephant in the room that needed to be addressed was that Orion had had some success in licensing the character to toy manufacturers and the animated series had taken off as well. There was no denying that kids had been enjoying *RoboCop*, especially on home video."

As such, *RoboCop 2*'s child villain (who eventually becomes 'good') feels like a badly miscalculated attempt to capture the imagination of the pre-pubescent/early teen market. This aside, Kershner's flick does have some saving graces, predominantly a fast-moving first half hour, which includes satirical news reports of a nuclear power plant (located in the Amazon rainforest) exploding and leaking its contents, as well as an advertisement for 'Magna-volt' – a device which will electrocute, and kill, car thieves. That said, RoboCop's attempt to clean out the still-in-turmoil Detroit

City (which OCP wants to transform into an upper class utopia called Delta City) from a drug called Nuke feels like a lazy plot device – although Weller's face-off against the new 'RoboCop 2' crime-fighting model at least looks pretty spectacular.

"This might surprise you but my favourite films do not feature special effects," says Kershner when we spoke with him. "I have never actively looked to do these types of films either. I have not made a film for a few years now because the scripts I have been given have just not been very good. With *RoboCop 2* it was stepping into someone else's mythology, much like *The Empire Strikes Back*, but I enjoyed the experience and remain very fond of the film. I was a little hesitant to do it, because I had turned down *Return Of The Jedi*, but I thought it was an interesting idea and I liked the characters." Even so, *RoboCop 2* would mark Kershner's final time calling the shots on a motion picture. "The reason that I never did another movie after *RoboCop 2* has nothing to with the movie, which I know some people were not so fond of," he claims. "Rather I figured 'I have already done some good films and unless I get another really amazing screenplay handed to me I do not want to do something else.' If I do take on another project it would not have a lot of violence in it, which of course *RoboCop* had, but it would probably still be in the fantasy genre… That is where I made my name."

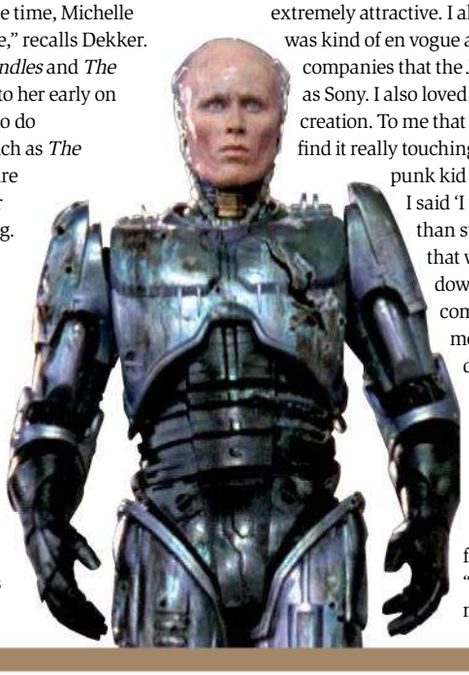
Although *RoboCop 2* was almost as profitable as the first movie, critical opinion was certainly not as favourable. However, in Hollywood money talks and, inevitably, a third instalment was quickly put on the table by the franchise's cash-strapped production outfit, Orion Pictures (then reeling from such expensive cinematic bombs as *Erik The Viking*, *Eve Of Destruction*, *Great Balls Of Fire* and *She-Devil*). "I got involved with *RoboCop 3* because the executive at Orion at the time, Michelle Manning, was a good friend of mine," recalls Dekker. "Michelle had produced *Sixteen Candles* and *The Breakfast Club* and it became clear to her early on that they did not really know what to do with *RoboCop*. Other franchises, such as *The Terminator* or *Back To The Future* are filmmaker driven, but the character of RoboCop was kind of free-floating. There was no one driving the ship and Michelle came to me and said 'How would you feel about doing something with this?' Well, you really cannot say no to a job like that. Anyone in a similar situation would have done the same thing. So I kind of leapt in, despite some of the obstacles."

Make no mistake: although *RoboCop 3* would turn out to be another disastrous sequel, Dekker's credentials at the time were – at least – impressive. His 1986 debut *Night Of The Creeps* is a tremendous horror-spoof while 1987's *The Monster Squad* effectively paid homage to the classic era of Universal terror flicks. Unfortunately, *RoboCop 3* was handed some unfortunate luggage straight from the get-go. "Orion wanted to deliberately aim the film towards a young audience," says Dekker. "The one mandate that they gave me, and there were not many, was that they wanted it to be a PG-13." Irregardless, with more finances than the director had ever had access to in the past, the director threw himself into the job at hand. "It was the biggest picture I had done," he reveals. "The budget for my films doubled each time. *Night Of The Creeps* cost about $6 million and *The Monster Squad* was about $12.5 million, while *RoboCop 3* was $24 million."

With Peter Weller (who was off doing the similarly ill-fated *Naked Lunch*) replaced by a new RoboCop in the form of Robert John Burke, who struggles horribly with the voice, and Nancy Allen unwisely killed off during the first 40 minutes, *RoboCop 3* focuses on a young homeless child who takes on the tin law enforcer as a sort-of surrogate parent. This time around, an armed police force called The Urban Rehabilitators is attempting to rid people from their houses in order to instigate a re-development project. Meanwhile, a mean-spirited Japanese conglomerate has invested in the near-bankrupt OCP group, leading to a conflict of interests and some decidedly weird robo-ninjas (classic line: "I thought your damn ninja was supposed to take care of RoboCop").

> **"I think watering down that violent, crazy, drugged-out comic book sensibility was a bad idea"** – Fred Dekker

"There was a script that Frank Miller had written for *RoboCop 3* that Orion had thrown away," continues Dekker. "However, I picked it up and dusted it off and there was a lot of stuff in it that I really liked. The whole notion of a conglomerate essentially creating the homeless problem for their own pursuit of money I found extremely left wing and extremely attractive. I also liked the Japanese element, which was kind of en vogue at the time with *Rising Sun* and all the companies that the Japanese were snapping up – such as Sony. I also loved the little girl, which was Frank's creation. To me that went back to *The Monster Squad* – I find it really touching when you have a pint-sized little punk kid with a giant, half mechanical man. So I said 'I would rather re-write Frank's script than start all over again' and in retrospect that was my first mistake. I think watering down that violent, crazy, drugged-out comic book sensibility that Verhoeven's movie had was a bad idea. You cannot do it. That is not who the character is."



Things got even worse when Orion went belly-up and *RoboCop 3* was held in limbo for two years – finally reaching American cinemas in November 1993, with fans and critics alike bemoaning the new, family-friendly escapades of the character. "In the end it did turn a small profit," mentions Dekker. "But what

Robo-quotes

Murphy's ten best one-liners

"Dead or alive, you're coming with me"
RoboCop

"Stay out of trouble"
RoboCop after being asked if he has a "message for the kids"

"Your move, creep"
RoboCop after shooting an adversary in the groin

"Serve the public trust, protect the innocent, uphold the law"
RoboCop after being asked his prime directives

"Madam, you have suffered an emotional shock. I will notify a rape crisis centre"
RoboCop to a recently saved, near rape victim

"Think it over creep"
RoboCop 2 Murphy offers some philosophical advice to a hoodlum

"It's a beautiful morning. Shame to waste it"
RoboCop 2 after being re-programmed to be non-violent

"Patience, Lewis. We're only human"
Final line in RoboCop 2

"I hope you are insured"
RoboCop 3 to a hotel manager before busting up the joint

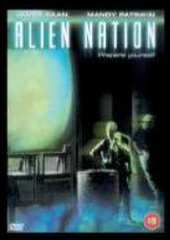
"You may want to call the fire department"
RoboCop 3 when Murphy is armed with a flamethrower

It's an iconic design that could only have been made in the Eighties.

As a series, *RoboCop* leant more towards action than intelligence as it progressed.

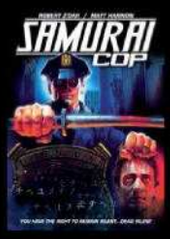
Cyberpunk and Robo rip-offs

After the success of RoboCop, enterprising producers of sci-fi features immediately began to dream up similarly nightmarish futuristic scenarios. With RoboCop, and that other popular slice of cyberpunk mayhem, The Terminator, indicating that a solid market existed for violent genre flicks, a number of pictures fused together the plots of both films. Few were worth watching, while some at least provided enough innovation to warrant remembering. Here are ten of the 'best'…

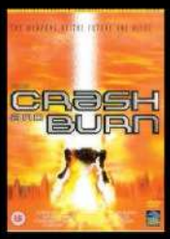


Alien Nation 1988
One of the finest immediate, post-*RoboCop* tie-in pictures, this moulds the cop buddy movie (eg *48 Hours*) with the sort of drab and dirty surroundings of Detroit/Delta City. The plot, in which a new drug is used to pacify the most 'unruly' members of the population, also has some elements in common with *RoboCop 2*.

Maniac Cop 1988
It is easy to imagine the meeting behind this splatter shocker: "Hey, what if our cop was an invincible, resurrected ghost-from-beyond-the-grave? And can we hire Bruce Campbell to be the hero?" Like Murphy in *RoboCop*, 'Maniac Cop' is a former lawman, intent on finding his killers, but he wipes out pretty much everyone anyway…



Samurai Cop 1989
Maniac Cop not only led to two sequels and a very similar film (*Psycho Cop* – which also launched a franchise of its own) but it no doubt helped to inspire this one – in which RoboCop is replaced by a super samurai lawman, eager to take out some Yakuza criminals. It also features lots of mullets and bad acting.



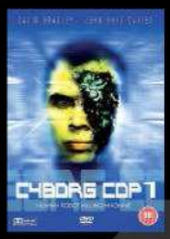
Crash And Burn 1990
The future is far from rosy in this Charles Band-produced piffle, in which the Ozone layer has depleted and a totalitarian government is in charge of the US – complete with robo-watchmen. As with Band's other *RoboCop* cash-in, *Robot Jox*, stop-motion cyborgs, which are very similar to ED-209, indulge in battles.

Hardware 1990
Part *Terminator* and part *RoboCop*, *Hardware* takes their cyberpunk credentials and the corporate suspicion of the Verhoeven picture to create a carnage-ridden trip through futuristic London. Perhaps acknowledging the influence, *Hardware* director Richard Stanley cast *RoboCop 3* star Robert John Burke in his next film, *Dust Devil*.

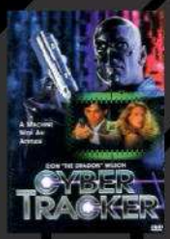
Robot Jox 1990
After a nuclear war, two opposing nations exist: A Russian communist super-state and a capitalist free market alternative. The two battle by sending out robot competitors to demolish each other. This was all a bit indebted to *RoboCop*'s final tussle with ED-209, and the Cold War had ended by the time this flop hit the screens. Oops.

Guyver 1991
Hmm, this is an odd one – featuring *Re-Animator* actor Jeffrey Combs and some schmuck who gets transformed, RoboCop-style, into a, cyborg crime fighter after meddling with an otherworldly device. A silly, manga-inspired opus, enough people still checked it out to warrant a 1994 sequel: *Guyver 2: Dark Hero*.

Accion Mutante 1993
Spain got in on the cyberpunk game with this comical slice of sci-fi, which owes some of its satire to the junk television 'infomercials' that screen throughout *RoboCop*. Every bit as postmodern as the Verhoeven flick, this thoroughly bizarre blood and violence epic has to be seen to be believed.



Cyborg Cop 1993
Well you have to give them props for the title at least. In this clunker none other than John Rhys Davies holds up on a Caribbean island where he turns people into robo-avengers. Every bit as daft as it sounds, this – rather shockingly – spawned two sequels (1994's *Cyborg Cop II* and 1995's *Cyborg Cop III*).



CyberTracker 1994
Do you really need to see a movie in which perennial straight-to-video action man Don 'The Dragon' Wilson lives in a futuristic Los Angeles where crime is fought by robot lawmen? Imagine *RoboCop* without the social commentary and approximately a fifth of the budget and you have *CyberTracker*… don't say you weren't warned!

The Games

Half-man, half machine, all game

Somewhat inevitably, given his gun-happy credentials, RoboCop went hand in hand with videogames. Instigated by software giant Ocean, the original *RoboCop* shoot-'em-up (released in 1988 for everything from the Spectrum to the Amiga and Atari ST systems) would become the bestselling PC game of the Eighties. A direct conversion of the acclaimed arcade game, the story walked Murphy through various side streets whereupon fire-power was needed to exterminate all number of crazy, weapon-wielding maniacs.

However, as any old-time gamer knows, the decade was owned by Nintendo and *RoboCop* would debut on the 8-bit NES with a lacklustre side-scrolling platform blaster from Data East. With awkward controls, and the ability to get killed at any given minute, the original Nintendo *RoboCop* was more of a challenge of patience than anything else – and not much was rectified when Ocean introduced a sequel on the system in 1991. Refreshingly, however, the events of *RoboCop 2* were at least pivotal to the game – with the character having to find quantities of Nuke in order to proceed. Also available on the Game Boy, *RoboCop*'s run on the Nintendo format is not fondly remembered.

> "He may be made of tin but that doesn't mean it should be a chore to step behind the helmet of Detroit City's finest"

By the time of *RoboCop 3*, however, Nintendo had released its SNES 16-bit system. Sadly, the much heralded level in which our hero flies across Detroit on a jetpack is, well, a bit crap. Much more interesting, though, was the long-awaited *RoboCop Versus Terminator* grudge match, which – based on the 1992 comic – became a videogame reality in 1993 on the SNES and the Sega Mega Drive/Master System (a NES 8-bit release was developed but cancelled). No doubt sending sci-fi fans into a state of ecstasy, the side-scrolling blaster is perhaps the best of all the *RoboCop* games.

Most recently, *RoboCop* has been adapted to the Xbox – with 2003's badly realised, and widely slammed, first-person shooter. The problems with this one are too long to list – with a 'tracking' mode that seems to work only when it wants to and villains who can apparently avoid your bullets. Just as the original tie-in games found it difficult to authentically 'translate' the robotic movements of the character without making it frustrating for the players, so too does the Xbox edition suffer from this. Yes, he might be made of tin but that does not mean it should be a chore to step behind the helmet of Detroit City's finest. Future game designers take note…

ROBOCOP VS TERMINATOR **1993**

ARCADE GAME **1988**

ROBOCOP 3 **1992**

ROBOCOP 3 **1992**

ROBOCOP **1988**

ROBOCOP (XBOX) **2003**

Robo's sidearm is arguably one of the coolest in sci-fi history.

RoboCop has had some terrific nemeses, Boddicker included.

The Best RoboCop DVDs

For years the best edition of the original *RoboCop* was the Region 1 Criterion Collection release, which is now out of print. Thankfully, the more recent UK and USA trilogy boxset imports over all of the extras from the Criterion disc as well as adding new features, such as the making-of feature. Nevertheless, the Criterion edition comes with a unique audio commentary track from director Paul Verhoeven, co-writer Edward Neumeier, executive producer Jon Davison and moderator Paul M Sammon, which does not appear on any other DVD release (yes, Verhoeven has done two different yack-tracks for the film – the other appears on the current disc). It also contains the director-approved ratio of 1.66.1 (the others display *RoboCop* in 1.85.1). Those seeking the original theatrical version will have to seek out the UK MGM release, while the recent Blu-ray release comes up short on the extras front. Considering their less-than-stellar reputation, no special editions exist of *RoboCop 2* or *RoboCop 3*, however, British fans can buy the entire four-part *Prime Directives* series in a boxset courtesy of Prism Entertainment.

He may have lost his looks, but Murphy remained true to himself.

There are so many classic scenes in *RoboCop*, full of tension and twists.

stung the most was seeing stuff like *Terminator 2* and *Jurassic Park* come out, which completely set a new standard for effects – to the point that *RoboCop 3* was left on the dust. So when it came out we were dead in the water."

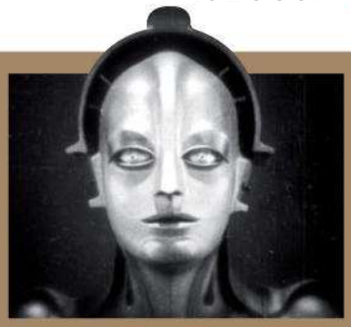
1993, however, also saw the debut of a new, syndicated *RoboCop* television series, this time with Richard Eden as the un-killable robotic law enforcer. Running for a whole 21 episodes (with a two-hour debut, which was ironically cribbed from a script that original writers Ed Neumeier and Michael Miner had conceived for *RoboCop 2*), the show was even more watered down than the third film – with a lack of grit, grime or gruelling action set pieces. However, the series did, from time to time, show some wit and invention worth noting – be it by attacking the more obscene elements of political correctness (Detroit's prison is now re-dubbed The Henry Ford Clinic for the Morally Challenged) or introducing Murphy's father (who was revealed to be a former policeman). Unfortunately, the ludicrous insistence that RoboCop refrain from shooting anyone made the broadcast version a bit of a damp squid.

> "The show was even more watered down than the third film – with a lack of grit, grime or set pieces"

Not, however, that this would mark the end of the big man's escapades, with 2000 bringing a fresh, four-part small screen spin-off, entitled *RoboCop: Prime Directives* to television watchers. Set ten years after the launch of the RoboCop model (this time the character is played, rather shabbily, by an undersized thespian called Page Fletcher), *Prime Directives* at least tries to return to some of the things that made the Verhoeven movie so great – be it sensationalistic media reports or the corporate/moneymaking agenda behind the more public face of the OCP Corporation. It's hardly surprising, then, that it boasted the same screenwriters as Verhoeven's original classic. Largely an attack on big business/international domineering practised by certain companies, *Prime Directives* undoubtedly has honourable ideas behind its existence but suffers greatly from cut-rate special effects and some particularly horrible acting.

Yet, you cannot keep a character as iconic as RoboCop down, and in 2014 the remake was released. Directed by José Padilha, it had quite an impressive cast, starring Gary Oldman, Michael Keaton and Samuel L. Jackson. It was first announced in 2005, but was halted only a year later when director Darren Aronofsky walked away from the project that originally heralded a 2010 release. When Padilha was brought on board it was given a summer 2013 release date which later got postponed to February 2014. It came out to mixed reviews, was criticised for its lack of violence and, of course, compared endlessly to the original film. It grossed a remarkable $242 million in the box office worldwide, making it the highest grossing RoboCop film of the franchise, regardless of its mixed reception.

ROBOCOP is available on Blu-ray from Orion Pictures



The ideas behind the idea

The biggest influences on RoboCop

The most obvious influence on *RoboCop* is Fritz Lang's silent sci-fi epic *Metropolis* (1927), whose cyber-girl creation boasts a design that has sparked the imagination of genre filmmakers ever since. This, alongside Lang's dystopian and fiercely pessimistic look at a future ruled by corporate cash and control, makes *Metropolis* a groundbreaking classic. However, while Weller's original Robo-costume, and the movie's politics, can be seen to boast Lang's patronage, a more UK-centric rub comes from the character of Judge Dredd. Everything from Murphy's attitude and dialogue – and especially the use of "creep" to describe villains – to his chin-exposing helmet has been inspired by 2000 AD's favourite anti-hero. Then, of course, there is *The Terminator* – a feature which Paul Verhoeven himself admits to watching, and studying, as soon as he got the *RoboCop* gig. Cameron's original 1984 cyber-slasher flick is unapologetically violent, especially in regards to its gunplay (and, arguably, its gun fetishism), something that *RoboCop* twists and satirises, while retaining the gritty urban tone. 1982's *Blade Runner* is another vital picture in the legacy of *RoboCop*, especially because of its trendsetting awareness of the 'world' in which it inhabits; from corporate sponsorship, to giant billboards to unsafe technology, Ridley Scott's classic is nothing if not ahead-of-its-time. However, when all is said and done, the clear influence behind *RoboCop* is Reaganomics – the ideology that ruled the Eighties. Based upon a low tax, free market platform, the result saw a new level of corporate merging and influence, privatisation and state borrowing, which *RoboCop* unashamedly takes aim at.

> "Everything from Murphy's attitude to his chin-exposing helmet has been cribbed from 2000 AD's anti-hero"

Being one of the most referenced and parodied films, *Ghostbusters* is a classic.

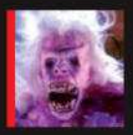
Dan Aykroyd has referred to Slimer as 'the ghost of John Belushi'.

CROSSING THE STREAMS

The Stay Puft Marshmallow Man scene is one of *Ghostbusters'* most inventive.

G AMS

They were overweight, they drank, they smoked, they were kicked out of college. They were every child's heroes in the Eighties. They were the Ghostbusters, and this is the complete guide…



By the summer of 1983 the name Ivan Reitman was synonymous with comedy. Over the last five years he'd forged a career with some of the greatest comedians of the day, and his last three films, *National Lampoons Animal House* (1978), *Meatballs* (1979) and *Stripes* (1981) were all notable showcases for his motion picture comedy troupe. His next project would be no different, harnessing the comedic kinship brought to fruition over the years. His next project would be *Ghostbusters*, one of the greatest comedies ever made.

The initial concept for *Ghostbusters* was conceived by Dan Aykroyd of *Trading Places* and *Blues Brothers* fame, reportedly wanting to do a modern version of an Abbott and Costello film with the special effects of contemporary films. Having been fascinated in the paranormal for years – Aykroyd was a card-carrying member of the American Society for Psychical Research – he developed what was to become a 40-page treatment for a film set in the future, where there were many groups of Ghostbusters, and where the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man was one of about 50 large-scale monsters. Initially written as a vehicle for himself and John Belushi, Aykroyd sent the treatment to Reitman, whose first thoughts for such an ambitious film were towards the cost of making it – that being anywhere between $40 and $300 million. The treatment itself was circuitous but nevertheless Reitman saw something in the idea that there could be a group of men who acted much like firemen but instead caught ghosts. Keen to develop this premise, Reitman asked Aykroyd to get help from Harold Ramis – a fellow graduate of the Second City comedy troupe and co-writer of Reitman's last three films – while Reitman would ask the studio, Columbia Pictures, if he could make the picture. Armed with only a premise and the names of Bill Murray (signing on after John Belushi's death), Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis, Reitman asked for a budget of $30 million, to which the studio head at the time, Frank Price, remarkably agreed, so long as the picture was ready for summer release the following year.

With principal photography due to start in November, Aykroyd invited Reitman and Ramis to Martha's Vineyard to hammer out a script and potentially cast the picture. Using the initial treatment as reference, Reitman turned focus towards the development of the Ghostbusters as characters, having them start as parapsychologists working in a university who, for one reason or another, decided to start up a ghost-catching business. It was a trick Reitman felt would help familiarise the characters and make them more believable to the audience. In essence, the audience would be anchored to the characters so that when the journey did turn supernatural, the audience would at least be able to make that jump from the plausible to the incredible. Three weeks later the script was finished, leaving just over one month before shooting started.

The plot for *Ghostbusters* centres around three scientists, Dr Peter Venkman, Dr Ray Stantz and Dr Egon Spengler, who after being fired from their university employment, decide to start up their own spectral investigation and removal service. Initially

"When the light is green, the trap is clean"

The containment unit

The more memorable busted ghosts and ghouls

Free-roaming, Vaporous, Full-torso Apparition

1 "This afternoon at the main branch of the New York Public Library on Fifth Avenue, ten people witnessed a free-roaming, vaporous, full-torso apparition."

Mr Stay Puft Marshmallow Man

2 A large, white, laughing mass of marshmallow dressed in a sailor's hat, red bosun's whistle and lanyard and a blue vest complete with a thunderous footstep.

The Scoleri Brothers

3 Two free-roaming, vaporous apparitions. Both are strapped into electric chairs and on their heads are electrocution caps with sparking electrical wires still attached.

Mink Coat

4 A mink coat that's alive because it made contact with mood slime. Mink heads pop out of the thick fur, snarling and biting with their sharp little teeth.

Zuul/Vinz Clortho

5 Zuul is a monstrous creature with a hellish snarl and sharp, razor-like claws that could only be described as a Terror Dog.

Slimer

6 "Sir, what you had there was what we refer to as a focused, non-terminal repeating phantasm or a Class Five Full Roaming Vapour... a real nasty one, too."

Vigo The Carpathian

7 A demented and sadistic 16th Century despot with a powerful evil presence. Self-described as being "the scourge of Carpathia, the sorrow of Moldavia."

The Jogger

8 An apparition loping along Central Park, checking his skeletal neck then watch as if looking for a pulse, oblivious to the frightful effect of his appearance.

The RMS Titanic

9 The name 'RMS Titanic' is clearly visible on the side of the ship. The gangplank is down and dozens of drowned passengers can be seen disembarking.

Vinz Clortho – The Keymaster (possessed Louis Tully)

10 "I am Vinz Clortho. Keymaster of Gozer, Volguus Zildrohar, Lord of the Sebouillia. Are you the Gatekeeper?" A possessed Louis Tully introduces himself.

Zuul – The Gatekeeper (possessed Dana Barrett)

11 "The name Zuul refers to a demi-god worshipped around 6000 BC by the... Hittites, the Mesopotamians and the Sumerians. Zuul was the Minion of Gozer."

Janosz Poha

12 A young art historian and painter with a quirky, intense and somewhat creepy demeanour, now the subject of a violent, transformative psychic episode.

Mood Slime

13 A psycho reactive substance that responds to human emotional states, sourced from a river of bubbling, seething, glowing slime beneath the city.

The Cinema Spectra

14 The Cinema Spectra is a free-roaming, vaporous, giant insect-like apparition that has four arms, a tail and wings.

Subway Apparition

15 A free-roaming, vaporous apparition that is translucent but with a blue tinge. It is menacing in its form and evil with its wail.

Gozer

16 A petite young woman with red pin-holes for eyes and a flat-top hairdo. Often described as Gozer The Sumerian, Gozer The Traveller and the Gozerian.

Nanny Apparition

17 A sweet, free-roaming, vaporous apparition disguised as an English nanny and complete with pram. Facially similar to Janosz.

The Beast Between The Arch

18 This giant vaporous apparition is Godzilla-like in its menace but ogre-like in its appearance. It's comes in at around 60 feet tall.

The acting team was so cohesive that they often gave improvised lines to each other.

In his state, we really don't think he should be driving.

business is slow until one client, Dana Barrett, enquires about a voice which screamed "Zuul" from her fridge and suddenly supernatural phenomena across the city starts to rise. At first the two incidents seem unconnected but it soon becomes apparent that the spike in paranormal activity is leading towards something bigger. Meanwhile Zuul, a demonic dog and minion of Gozer, has taken Dana as it's host, while her neighbour, Louis Tully, has been taken by Vinz Clortho, another minion of Gozer. On top of this, the EPA serve a Cease and Desist Order on the Ghostbusters in order to facilitate the shutting down of their containment unit (the storage facility for the captured apparitions), an event that both ignites and coincides with Gozer's now impending arrival. With the Ghostbusters now arrested, all attention is on Dana's building where it is explained by Stantz that the building is, "a huge, super-conductive antenna designed and built expressly for the purpose of pulling in and concentrating spiritual turbulence." In other words, the building was designed to be a gateway for the coming of Gozer, and we learn that in order for it to be opened, the Gatekeeper (Dana/Zuul) and The Keymaster (Louis/Vinz Clortho) must meet. With mass hysteria and unexplainable supernatural activity tearing the city apart, the Mayor of New York summons the Ghostbusters from jail in the hope that they can help. The Ghostbusters explain that the city is "headed for a disaster of biblical proportions" and they are its best and only chance at saving it. Though no sooner than they're released do the Gatekeeper and Keymaster meet, sending forth Gozer's arrival, and with her their destructor, a 112ft Stay Puft Marshmallow man.

Casting for the film had already begun during the script's drafting at Martha's Vineyard with Murray, Aykroyd and Ramis agreeing to take the three male lead roles. Of the three actors to play the founding members of the Ghostbusters, Bill Murray was undoubtedly the main star, for since leaving *Saturday Night Live* he'd starred in *Meatballs* (1979), *Caddyshack* (1980), *Stripes* (1981) and *Tootsie* (1982) – four blockbuster hits, two of which had been star vehicles directed by Ivan Reitman. While Aykroyd, like Murray, had garnered box-office success since leaving *Saturday Night Live*, most of it was a result from his pairing with another box-office draw: in *Blue Brothers* he starred with John Belushi and in *Trading Places*, Eddie Murphy. His comedy was unique in its style, combining youth, peculiar taste and an almost lunatic intensity to his act. While Ramis, like Murray and Aykroyd, had his share of successes, they were mostly off camera, writing Reitman's last three films and directing *Caddyshack* and *National Lampoon's Vacation* (1983). Murray though, was more the leading man than the others and a natural choice to take the role of Venkman, a parapsychologist with a disregard for his profession who treats it as more of a dodge or hustle than the line of work it is. Characterised by his flippant persona and womanising demeanour, this was a role tailored to

> "Ghostbusters is one of the most lucrative and successful franchises of all time"

"We had part of a Slinky. But I straightened it"

The inevitable memorabilia spin-offs

In 1986, two years after the motion picture, TV production company DiC made the series *The Real Ghostbusters* to capitalise on the film's initial appeal to the younger audience. The show was a success, and like most children's shows that are, it spawned a toy line. The line was manufactured by Kenner and included role-play sets such as the Proton Pack and Ghost Traps and play sets that included the Firehouse, Ecto-1 and other characters exclusive to the show. The Ghostbusters were modelled on characters from the series and not the film. Since then, toymakers Trendmasters and NECA have developed their own lines, the former being toys based on *Extreme Ghostbusters*, and the latter from the first film. *Ghostbusters* also had some success in the videogames industry, the first game in particular winning over fans and gamers alike.

Seeing ghosts

The special effects of Ghostbusters

The visual effects for the film were completed by Boss Film Studios, a newly assembled crew of experienced special effects artists whom, having worked for other visual effects companies on projects such as *Star Wars*, *Empire Strikes Back* and *Poltergeist*, decided to start their own company. One of their first projects was completing the 200 post-production opticals for *Ghostbusters*. The team's Animation Supervisor, Terry Windell, recalls meeting with Aykroyd and Reitman to discuss the special effects for the film and thinking that they, "...had a naïve approach to making special effects, but a very energetic approach to the style of the film. They wanted it to be balls out fun. They wanted people to laugh." With this in mind, the effects were designed with cartoon quality, ultimately adding to the comedy of the picture. One of the signatures of the movie is the neutrona-wand animation, a result of the team being asked by the film's creators what they thought the result would be if someone had a thermo nuclear accelerator on their back and turned it on. Their answer, Terry Windell explains, was 'rubberised light'. "It was made by filming explosions on a stage and then re-photographing them with a technique the team developed, called pin-blocking. You could minimise these explosions so the tip of the gun had pyro-technique explosions and flares laced in there, with five levels of classical animation that was also manipulated on an optical printer."

BEYOND GHOSTBUSTERS

What did the cast do after Ghostbusters?

Winston Zeddemore

Ernie Hudson

Though unable to reprise the role of Zeddemore for the animated series, Hudson has had some success in films, such as *The Crow* (1994), *The Basketball Diaries* (1995) and both Miss Congeniality films (2000, 2005).

Dr Egon Spengler

Harold Ramis

Ramis spent most of his time since Ghostbusters behind the camera and met considerable success with films such as *Groundhog Day* (1993), *The Ice Harvest* (2005). He sadly passed away in February 2014.

Dr Peter Venkman

Bill Murray

After a run of poor comedies, Murray received much critical acclaim for his performances in *The Royal Tenenbaums* (2001) and *Lost In Translation* (2003), for which he was nominated for an Academy Award.

Dr Raymond Stantz

Dan Aykroyd

Aykroyd took his directorial debut with *Nothing But Trouble* (1991) and starred in the critically mauled *Blues Brothers 2000* (1998). He reprised the role of Stantz for the Disney film *Casper* and is writing the third outing for the Ghostbusters.

Rick Moranis got the part of Louis Tully after John Candy turned down the role.

Winston was initially written to be a guard at the Ghostbusters' firehouse.

The amusingly amateur nature of the three Ghostbusters was prevalent throughout.

Murray's already established dry humour and laid-back approach. But unlike the roles written for the other Ghostbusters, his was a role more integral to the story's plot, hence Murray coming off as the more rounded character of the three – a point best exemplified through Venkman's initial self-serving desire to prove himself to Dana and later transition to subtle hero in his commitment to save her. Aykroyd unsurprisingly took the part of Stantz, a part distinguished by its wordy and technical monologues and youthful enthusiasm towards the paranormal, a character described by Reitman as, "the heart of the Ghostbusters". Ramis, though, would take the less spectacular and laconic role of Spengler, exercising his hyper-articulate voice to almost Spock-like quality. The fourth lead for Dana Barrett, however, would require auditioning, though that soon changed when Sigourney Weaver asked to meet with Reitman. At the time of casting she was already a star in her own right, scoring huge success in Ridley Scott's *Alien*. Initially reluctant to audition Weaver, Reitman relented only to learn that she was desperate to do a comedy, so much so that she jumped on Reitman's couch and started barking like a dog, leaving Reitman with no doubt as who to cast for the part.

With the leads now sewn up, casting turned to the supporting characters. Originally, actor and comedian John Candy had agreed to take the part of Louis Tully but soon decided against it after reading the script. Candy apparently wasn't able to understand the character and wanted to play the part with a German accent and twin Rottweilers; this was, in Reitman's eyes, both one dog too many and a great shame. However, what was to be Candy's loss turned into Rick Moranis's gain, winning the role and making it his own, so much so that Moranis is credited for improvising and writing most of his breakneck dialogue. Like the part for Tully, Winston Zeddemore was written with another actor in mind, Eddie Murphy, but due to other commitments he

Ghostbusters' special effects had a distinct cartoon feel about them.

The film's evil villain, Gozer, played by Yugoslavian model Slavitza Jovan.

declined the role, forcing the writers to put back Zeddemore's joining of the Ghostbusters until much later in the film. The part, now considerably smaller, was eventually given to Ernie Hudson, a stage actor who had little success on the big screen.

On schedule, principal photography began in New York before moving, after four weeks, to Los Angeles to shoot the remainder and majority of the film on soundstages. Though a lot of the picture was shot on the Columbia soundstages, this is truly a New York movie, capturing much of the city's chauvinism with its quirky and energetic dialogue. The focus on its architecture, in particular the gargoyles and statues that keep a watchful eye over the city, is also used effectively. With production seemingly in hand, the rest would be down to the cast – though any apprehensions as to their ability had been dispersed years ago, for Reitman knew his troupe and the already infectious rapport that existed between them, something which only time could have harnessed. This understanding, of course, led to a lot of give and take with the improvisation of lines. It was often the case that the improvised line was offered to the other actor, a trait previously learned from their Second City schooling, Ramis recalling the motto as, "If you concentrate on making the other person look good then everybody looks good." For those outsiders on set, witnessing such actor-generosity was both a blessing and an assistance, particularly for Weaver, who provided much of the story's realistic core, seeing herself as the comic foil or Margaret Dumont to the Ghostbusters' Marx routine.

> "After Sigourney Weaver started barking like a dog, Reitman had no doubt about who to cast"

With the filming completed in early February, the success of the movie now hinged on its supernatural attraction, leaving the then four-time Academy Award winning special effects supervisor, Richard Edlund, less than four months to complete nearly two hundred post-production opticals. Edlund stated at the time: "We have a short schedule for this project and an enormous amount of work, and we wouldn't be able to do that had we not had the combined talent and the experience of having worked on several other effects pictures, such as *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Poltergeist*, *E.T.* We've been really lucky to assemble one of the best ever effects crews ever assembled." At first the task in hand seemed daunting, but after a meeting with the film's creators it was understood that a lot of the visual effects should add to the film's comedy heart. This enabled Edlund and his team to have more fun with the visual production of the picture, rendering a lot of the effects with a cartoon quality.

The film was released in the United States on 8 June 1984 with a production cost of $31 million dollars. In its first week of release, *Ghostbusters* broke Columbia's 'best opening weekend' records and 'best opening week' records, eventually going on to make approximately $240 million in the US and over $50 million abroad. At the time, these figures put it within the top ten highest grossing films of all time. The film opened to critical acclaim, with the *New York Times* writing, "Its jokes, characters and storyline are as wispy as the ghosts themselves, and a good deal less substantial", and *Newsweek Magazine* declaring, "Everyone seems to be working toward the same goal of relaxed insanity.

Bustin' makes you feel good

Five of the best scenes

"Get her!"

1 A well crafted scene that highlights the team's amateur and uncomplicated approach to business. Where it could have been played just for laughs, Reitman decides to conceal their plan in order to heighten suspense, delivering one of the film's more frightening scenes.

"Great rehearsal"

2 A key scene in the Venkman/Barratt relationship, illustrating both the attraction between the two leads and the change in Venkman's character from self-serving womaniser to committed friend. Couple this with Elmer Bernstein's enchanting score and you have a very sweet scene.

"Choose or perish"

3 A truly astounding, original scene that's conceptualised magnificently by Ramis, Aykroyd and Reitman. Starting with its seismic steps, to what looks like something big and white between the buildings, the 112ft Stay Puft Marshmallow Man is then revealed.

"Don't cross the streams"

4 This is the first time that we get to see the Proton Packs in action for any great length of time. The ion streams are unique to the franchise, much like the Lightsaber is to *Star Wars*. This is the toy that every kid wanted come Christmas 1984.

"We got one!"

5 Definitely the turning point in the movie for the Ghostbusters, which is kick-started by Janine's accented rejoice, "We got one!", before hitting the alarm bell. A cleverly choreographed scene with great music, accentuated by the hero-esque nature of Ghostbuster jobs.

Anatomy of a Ghostbuster

Have you got what it takes?

1 Get a doctorate
Own at least one PhD, preferably in the subjects of Parapsychology or Psychology. "Back off man, I'm a scientist."

2 Honesty
Get that job, do whatever it takes, who cares if people say you sold out? "Ah, if there's a steady pay cheque in it, I'll believe anything you say."

3 Believe in yourself
If you're really good then tell everybody. "We had the tools, we had the talent."

4 Good manners
Don't be afraid to use your good manners in the presence of other people who obviously have none. "You forgot to say the magic word."

5 Know your options
Know your strengths and learn from your past. If you're not good at something, quit. "You don't understand. I've worked in the private sector – they expect results."

6 Acceptance
Accept that there's a bigger, more powerful force out there, guiding you along a path, sometimes for the better. "For whatever reasons, Ray, call it... fate, call it luck, call it karma, I believe everything happens for a reason. I believe that we were destined to get thrown outta this dump."

Dan Aykroyd as Dr Raymond Stantz, the "heart of the Ghostbusters".

Venkman hosts his own show in *Ghostbusters II*.

If there's something weird in the neighbourhood, who're you gonna call?

Toon time

A comparison between the film's heroes and their animated counterparts

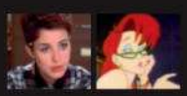
Peter Venkman
Portrayed by Bill Murray in both the live-action films and voiced by Lorenzo Music, then Dave Coulier, in the animated series, both Venkman characters share a dry wit and laid-back attitude. Of note is the fact that two of the actors to play Venkman (Murray and Lorenzo) also played Garfield.

Ray Stantz
Considered the heart of the Ghostbusters, both in the live-action film and animated series. Stantz is characterised by his youthful enthusiasm and forthright acceptance of the paranormal. In the films he was played by Dan Aykroyd, while in the animated series he was voiced by Frank Welker.

Egon Spengler
Portrayed by Harold Ramis in the films and voiced by Maurice LaMarche in the animated series, Egon is characterised by his laconic and hyper-articulate manner. The only difference between the two characters being his romantic involvement with Janine Melnitz in the animated series.

Winston Zeddemore
After portraying Zeddemore in the first movie, Ernie Hudson auditioned for the part in the first animated series only to lose out to Arsenio Hall. Both characters often serve as the voice of reason, displaying far more common sense than the other Ghostbusters.

Janine Melnitz
The Ghostbusters' secretary was played by Annie Potts in both films and voiced by Laura Summer, Kath Soucie and Pat Musick in the animated series. Though initially similar to the film's character, the animated persona had many makeovers in a bid to soften the character's appeal.



Marshmallow Man
Featuring extremely rarely in the cartoon and only briefly in the movie, Mr Stay Puft's iconic status is really quite incredible. Of course, in the film he was a force for evil, but in the cartoon he was used to help defeat ghosts that were too tough for the team to manage on their own.

Slimer
In the motion picture, Slimer's appearance was a tribute to Aykroyd's recently deceased friend, John Belushi, and the gluttony he portrayed in the film *Animal House* as Bluto. The animated series saw Slimer as a friendlier apparition going so far as to make him a Snarf-like mascot.

Ghostbusters is wonderful summer nonsense." Spurring the film's phenomenal success was the later Academy Award nominated and number one hit song *Ghostbusters* from Ray Parker Jr, a music video considered by many as pioneering for its day in that it sought to promote the film through the new and growing medium of MTV. The film itself spawned one sequel, with rumours of a third instalment in the pipeline; three animated series, *The Real Ghostbusters* (1986), *Slimer! And The Real Ghostbusters* (1989) and *Extreme Ghostbusters* (1991); three separate lines of toys from Kenner, Trendmasters and NECA; numerable video and arcade games; comics; novels and a theme park special effects show, making *Ghostbusters* one of the most lucrative and successful franchises of all time. Today, it's without question a classic and possibly the only example where an ensemble of distinguished talent ever really dared to mix the genres of comedy, horror and science fiction with inarguable success.

With *Ghostbusters* intended as a one shot deal, there were no plans from the film's creators with regards to making a sequel, despite pressure from Columbia Pictures, as the company was eager to capitalise on the first film's phenomenal success and now popular animated series, *The Real Ghostbusters*. What changed their minds was a four-hour lunch meeting in 1988 about possibly starring together again, but not necessarily for a *Ghostbusters* sequel. About that lunch meeting Reitman recalls, "We thought, let's try something else together – all the same people, different characters, different story. You start saying, well, what if we did do *Ghostbusters*? What would we do? What would that story be like?" Murray added: "I think walking into the meeting, no one really felt we'd make *Ghostbusters II*. But in the course of lunch we had so many laughs and so much fun that it became clear we'd really enjoy working together again."

With the desire to make a sequel now ignited, Ramis and Aykroyd set about drafting a script, a script that Ramis thought ought to really progress the characters and have "something new to say". The story itself would be set five years on from the events of the first film and see the Ghostbusters disbanded, each having seemingly moved on with their lives. Venkman is now a host on his own TV show, *World Of The Psychic*; Stantz owns his own bookshop, 'Ray's Occult'; and Spengler now conducts research at the Institute for Advanced Theoretical Research. As before, the dramatic and centre of the story would evolve around Dana Barrett, who, now mother to a young child, works at the Manhattan Museum of Art restoring old paintings. Not before long, there's a sudden resurgence in supernatural activity across the city, a result of the ectoplasmic river of slime that pulsates beneath the city's streets, and the Ghostbusters are called out of retirement. The Ghostbusters begin conducting tests on the slime, soon realising that its directly related to a painting at the Museum – a painting of Vigo the Carpathian, a cruel 16th Century Moldavian, who seeks to return at the stroke of midnight on New Years Eve and start 'the season of evil' by transferring his soul to that of Dana's baby.

Principle photography began on 28 November 1988 in New York City for the completion of NYC exteriors, before moving to Los Angeles to complete the rest of the film. However, this time the film's special effects would be added by George Lucas's Industrial Light and Magic, the people responsible for the *Stars Wars* trilogy, *Back To The Future* and the *Star Trek* films.

Ghostbusters II opened on 16 June 1989 and set a box-office record with a three-day take of $29.5 million, though this figure was broken by *Batman* precisely one week later. By the end of its theatrical run, the film had grossed approximately $112 million domestically, and over $102 million abroad, making it almost as successful financially as the first film. Despite its rewards, the film itself is nothing more than a hammered out rehash of the first film's original premise, playing it safe when it should have been bold. As a consequence, *Ghostbusters II* comes across as somewhat half-hearted and lacklustre, never really capturing the magic of its predecessor. That said, the comedy value is still there for all to see, and it would seem that going into the shoot there was a confidence amongst the filmmakers that enough of the character groundwork had been laid in the first picture for them to now allow the actors freedom to 'play around' with their respective roles. Murray's character, Venkman, was the best example of this – now coolly removed from the proceedings and allowed room to display his deadpan talents and dry wit as if it were in a separate subplot all by itself.

In retrospect, *Ghostbusters* is responsible for much of today's summer blockbusters, paving the way for big-budget action comedies. As a tried and tested template for mixed genre success, it is arguably responsible for the invention and greenlighting of films such as *Men In Black*, *Frighteners* and *Evolution*. The latter was even directed by Ivan Reitman and starred Dan Aykroyd in a film that more closely resembles *Ghostbusters*, save the sequel, than any other film. As for its legacy, *Ghostbusters* is rightly considered one of the finest genre films of the Eighties, referenced and parodied to varying degrees of success over the years. Jack Black's 2008 movie, *Be Kind Rewind* – which includes an extensive scene where his character recreates the first movie after deleting it from their video store – is one of the latest to pay its respects, but we'd bet folding money that it won't be the last. More than just a part of genre history, *Ghostbusters* has a place all its own in popular culture, and we couldn't think of a blockbuster more deserving.

GHOSTBUSTERS is available on Blu-ray from Columbia Pictures

***Ghostbusters II* still had some inventive moments.**

The future

What the 21st Century might hold for the Ghostbusters

The future of the *Ghostbusters* series has now been made concrete. Back in 2014 we heard from *The Hollywood Reporter* that the studio were looking for Paul Feig to direct an all-female team of Ghostbusters for a reboot. Filming began in summer 2015 and the cast includes Kristen Wiig, Melissa McCarthy, Kate McKinnon and Leslie Jones as the Ghostbusters and Chris Hemsworth as their receptionist. Scheduled for a summer 2016 release, it looks like the Ghostbusters really are back. *Ghostbusters 3* has been in development for quite some time. Dan Aykroyd has a script and despite the reboot being in production would still like to see his idea for a sequel brought to the big screen.

"Hey! Does this pole still work?"

The most memorable quotes

"Back off, man; I'm a scientist"
Dr Peter Venkman

"We got one!!!"
Janine Melnitz

"This is a major disgrace! Forget MIT or Stanford now, they wouldn't touch us with a ten-metre cattle prod!"
Ray Stantz

"I love this town!"
Winston Zeddemore

"That's great! Actual physical contact!"
Ray Stantz

"Sometimes, shit happens, somebody's gotta deal with it, and who're you gonna call?"
Dr Peter Venkman

"Ah… if there's a steady pay cheque in it, I'll believe anything you say"
Winston Zeddemore

"…human sacrifice, dogs and cats living together… mass hysteria!"
Dr Peter Venkman

"I am the Keymaster. Are you the Gatekeeper?"
Louis Tully

"I've worked in the private sector – they expect results"
Ray Stantz

"That's a big Twinkie"
Winston Zeddemore

"Let's show this prehistoric bitch how we do things downtown"
Dr Peter Venkman

"We're the best. We're the beautiful. We're the only… Ghostbusters"
Dr Peter Venkman

34 years ago, George Lucas and Steven Spielberg unleashed one of cinema's most iconic heroes on an unsuspecting public. As he prepares to embark on his latest adventure, SciFiNow looks back at the career and history of Indiana Jones

FORTUNE AND GLORY

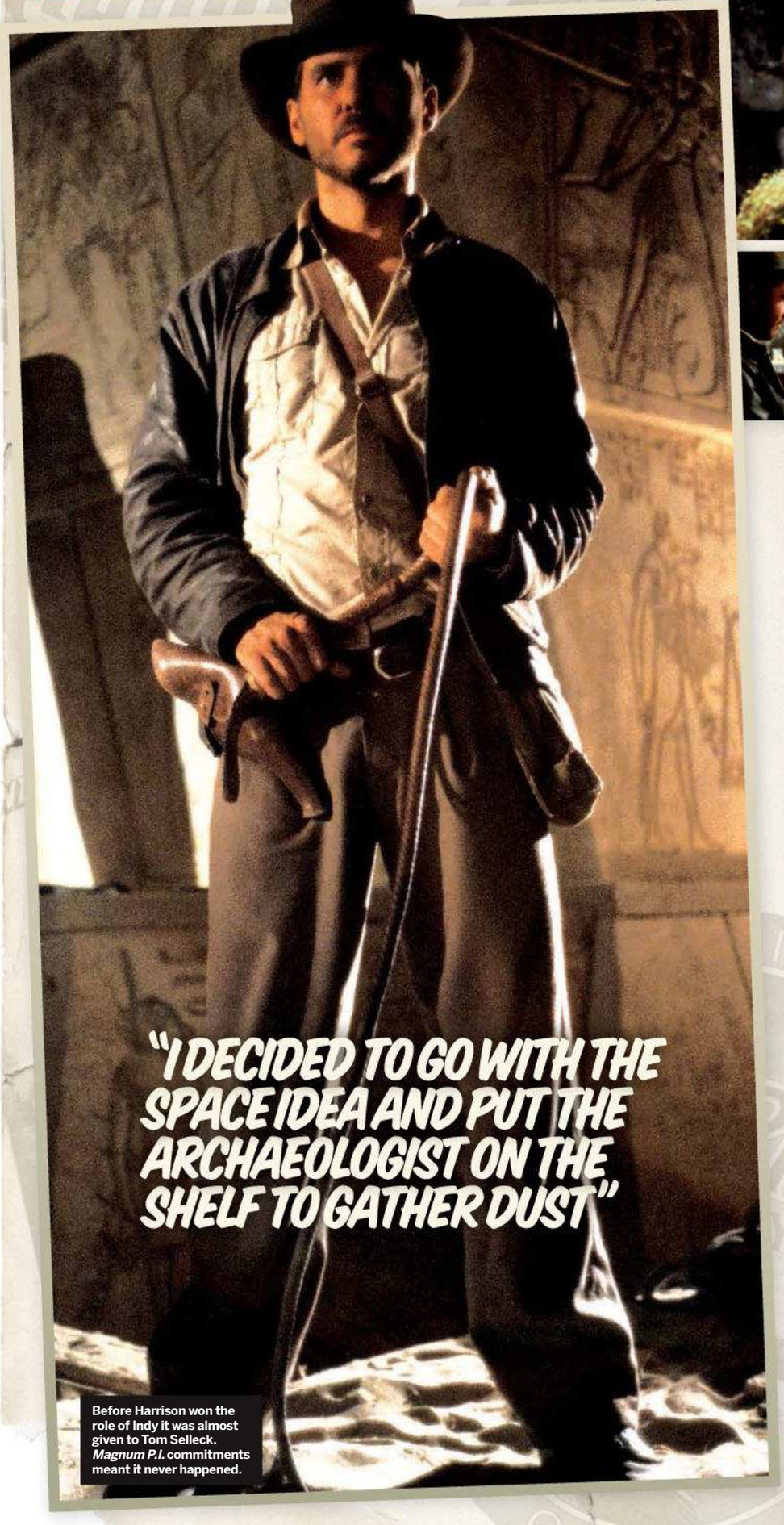
Indiana Jones is one of cinema's true icons. Earnest and tenacious and sporting the spirit of a thousand bulldogs, he cuts a swarthy figure as he faces off against Nazis and mysterious cults, while searching out some of the world's rarest and most valuable treasures. A man who's quite happy to use either his mind or his fists to settle a problem, he's a lovable rogue who is never afraid of the odds and will always keep on fighting, even when all hope seems lost. Giant balls, supernatural entities and death-dealing traps hardly cause the intrepid hero to break into a sweat. Just don't show him a snake...

The story of Indiana Jones began several years before his big-screen debut in 1981. In fact, his origins stretch back to the Saturday matinees that George Lucas used to watch as a child. Although Lucas was adamant that his idea for a rough and ready adventurer would one day make it to the big screen, the story of Indiana Smith (as he was then known) would have to wait. Lucas had another project on the boil. A little film that went by the name of *Star Wars*. "The *Indiana Jones* story actually started long before the screenplay of *Star Wars*," confirms Lucas. "A subject that came up initially was to do it in outer space, like *Flash Gordon*. The other idea I had at the same time was to do it with an archaeologist who goes around finding ancient artefacts that had sort of a supernatural flavour to them. Both ideas would be a serial, non-stop kind of adventure. I decided to go with the space idea and put the archaeologist on the shelf to gather dust."

As Lucas began to focus on what would become one of the most successful movie franchises of all time, he had a chance meeting with a fellow filmmaker, Phil Kaufman, who began to get incredibly excited as Lucas described his old-fashioned adventure and the pair immediately set to work. The duo spent a good three to four weeks working on Lucas's screenplay and it was at this point that Kaufman suggested the Ark of the Covenant as a suitable supernatural relic for Indiana to recover. Lucas loved the idea and felt it was perfect for the story, but then disaster struck. Kaufman revealed to Lucas that he was heading off to write the screenplay for a new Clint Eastwood movie, *The Outlaw Josey Wales*. So, with no one to collaborate with, Lucas once again put ▷

"SPORTING THE SPIRIT OF A THOUSAND BULLDOGS, INDIANA JONES IS ONE OF CINEMA'S TRUE ICONS"

This sequence



"I DECIDED TO GO WITH THE SPACE IDEA AND PUT THE ARCHAEOLOGIST ON THE SHELF TO GATHER DUST"

Before Harrison won the role of Indy it was almost given to Tom Selleck. *Magnum P.I.* commitments meant it never happened.

the intrepid adventurer back on the shelf and went off to lens *Star Wars*. Lucas's vision refused to die, however, and once *Star Wars* had wrapped, he found himself with another opportunity, and this time nothing would get in the way.

"George and I had planned a vacation to get away from the *Star Wars* opening, which has since gone on to become a tradition with us," begins Steven Spielberg. "I joined him in Hawaii and we were just sitting there, waiting for the grosses to come in. Kind of like waiting for election returns. Anyway, at that point it turned out to be a landslide for George Lucas and he let out this huge sigh of relief and asked me what I was going to do next. 'I've always wanted to direct a James Bond picture,' I told him. 'I have a better idea,' he told me. 'It's called *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*.'"

"So we sat down and I told him about the story and how it was like a Saturday matinee serial, and that [Indiana] got in one mess after another," continues Lucas. "And he just said, 'Fantastic, let's do this. There's only one thing I don't like. I don't like the name.' I said, 'All right. What if we call him Indiana Jones?'" Spielberg loved the new surname and work began in earnest on the new project. Impressed with a screenplay he had brought from Lawrence Kasdan, Spielberg showed it to Lucas and Kasdan was quickly brought on board the *Indiana Jones* project. Kasdan's screenplay, *Continental Divide*, proved that he was the perfect person to capture the old matinee magic that Lucas and Spielberg were striving for and the trio spent the following three days putting the *Raiders* story together. By the end of the three-day session the whole plot was pretty much sketched out, so, pen and paper in hand, Lawrence Kasdan went off to write what would become the highest grossing movie of 1981, earning just over $242 million at the box office.

"Larry added so much wit and humour," recalls Spielberg about Kasdan's contribution. "He gave it a 1930's Preston Sturges meets Michael Curtiz feel and Indiana Jones was a little like Humphrey Bogart from *Treasure Of The Sierra Madre*. Larry layered it and flavoured it and brought it to life."

Lucas and Spielberg now had a filmable screenplay, but there were still hurdles for the pair to cross, and although *Star Wars* turned out to be a massive success for both Lucas and 20th Century Fox, finding a willing backer for the pair's epic adventure was proving to be far from easy. "The film got turned down by everyone in town," recalls Lucas. "Nobody wanted to do it because it looked like a huge movie with lots of action and lots of stuff. I told them that we could do [*Raiders*] for $20 million, but they just said: 'We don't believe you. That's impossible.' Finally we got Paramount to say that it would do the film and I told Steven that we would have to shoot it like a TV show (quick and dirty), use old-fashioned tricks and not take a lot of time."

perhaps sums Indy up better than any other. He's a hero's hero and no mistake.

Money had been secured, but there was still the actual casting of the main hero to consider. Although Spielberg suggested Harrison Ford for the role, Lucas wasn't keen on the idea. "I remember saying, 'I don't want him to be my Bobby De Niro. I don't want to have every movie I make star Harrison Ford.'" Of course, some could well argue that this in itself is no bad thing, but Lucas was adamant and after several casting sessions, they found themselves being impressed by supercharged performances from Tom Selleck and Sean Young (respectively playing the parts of Indy and Marion Ravenwood). Convinced they had found their Indy, Spielberg and Lucas went after Selleck, only to be told by Bob Daly, then head of CBS, that Selleck had a commitment to the TV show *Magnum P.I.* "Tom had a TV series that took him to great heights of fame and fortune," continues Spielberg. "And we had nothing."

Spielberg once again suggested Harrison Ford, and Lucas finally relented and arranged a meeting. "George called me up and told me that he wanted me to meet Steven Spielberg, who I'd not met before," recalls Ford. "We had a wonderful discussion and got along very well. I was reluctant to initially sign up for three films, but knowing the people involved, I was willing to sign up for three in the case of *Indiana Jones*."

Spielberg and Lucas now had their leading man and the rest of the cast quickly fell into place. The late Denholm Elliott was drafted in to play Marcus Brody, a museum curator and friend and mentor to Indy. "I've always been a big Denholm Elliot fan," explains Spielberg. "He leant a kind of paternal warmth to *Indiana Jones*, who's always saying: 'I don't want you to get hurt.' He's the voice of reason, the voice of caution. He's more paranoid than Indy could ever be."

Karen Allen was eventually cast as the fiery Marion Ravenwood, due to the director feeling she had the required spunk and the look of a woman from the Thirties, while the decidedly non-Egyptian looking John Rhys-Davies was eventually awarded the role of Sallah. "I first offered Sallah to Danny DeVito and he was dying to play this character, but he had problems with his TV series, with the dates, and eventually couldn't do it. But he was my first choice," continues Spielberg. "Then when I saw *Shogun*, I said, 'who is this British actor?'"

While pleased with his part, Rhys-Davies was a little concerned with Spielberg's choice of casting and he was quick to point out the discrepancies between himself and Sallah. "So I went and saw Steven and I said: 'Well here's the thing. Sallah is described as a 5'2", skinny Egyptian digger. What do you propose? Surgery?'" says Rhys-Davies. "He simply laughed and said, 'No, no, no, no. I want a cross between your character in *Shogun* and Falstaff.' Which I found rather interesting."

Casting continued and included Paul Freeman as Indy's adversary Rene Belloq, Ronald Lacey playing Arnold Toht, a Nazi interrogator with a penchant for snazzy coat hangers, and Alfred Molina as the traitorous Satipo. Despite only appearing in *Raiders*' opening sequence, the London born Molina instantly left a lasting impression with fans thanks to his backstabbing term, and he justifiably meets ➤

"RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK CEMENTED HARRISON FORD AS ONE OF CINEMA'S GREATEST ACTION HEROES"

"I'M YOUR GODDAMNED PARTNER"

Indiana Jones doesn't go on his adventures on his own you know

SALLAH

Played by Jonathan Rhys-Davies

Egypt's best digger is Indiana's long-time friend who appears in *Raiders* and *Crusade*. He is hired by the Nazis to uncover the Ark of the Covenant, but he soon teams up with Indy. He also saves Indy's life by stopping him from eating a poisoned date.

SAITPO

Played by Alfred Molina

Indy and Saitpo venture into a trap-laden tomb in order to retrieve a valuable gold idol. Despite Indy helping him on several occasions, Saitpo convinces Dr Jones to toss him the statue, only to leave the adventurer to his death. The only person to die, though, is the traitorous Saitpo.

MARION RAVENWOOD

Played by Karen Allen

Indy walks back into Marion's life when he seeks an artefact of her father's. Marion pressures Jones into taking her with him and they eventually rekindle their past relationship. She reappeared in *Indy IV* with a son who may or may not be Indy's.

SHORT ROUND

Played by Jonathan Ke Quan

Indy's diminutive sidekick from *Temple Of Doom* is always on hand to get Indy out of scrapes and shows a considerable talent for driving, despite the fact he has to use blocks to reach the pedals.

WU HAN

Played by David Yip

A friend of Indy's who is working undercover at the Obi-Wan nightclub. Wu Han is tragically killed and just before he dies he tells Indy "I've followed you on many adventures, but into the great unknown mystery I go first Indy."

WILHELMINA 'WILLIE' SCOTT

Played by Kate Capshaw

Willie finds herself mixed up in Indy's adventure when she gets her hands on an antidote he needs. The pair initially despise each other, but they soon thaw and Indy bags his second girl in as many films.

MARCUS BRODY

Played by Denholm Elliott

Marcus leaves the comfort of his museum and sets off to help Indy recover his father in *The Last Crusade*. But he ends up to be more trouble than he's worth and we discover that he once got lost in his own museum.

DR ELSA SCHNEIDER

Played by Alison Doody

Elsa is a Nazi stooge who tricks both Indy and his father into thinking that she's actually on their side in their search for the Holy Grail. Her duplicity is finally revealed when Henry Jones senior explains that she speaks German in her sleep.

PROFESSOR HENRY JONES

Played by Sean Connery

Indy's father is not at all amused by the many scrapes and adventures that his son lands himself in, but gradually learns to accept his son's ways. Henry gets shot at the end of *The Last Crusade* and can only be saved by the religious artefact that they are seeking.

Ford may not have initially wanted to sign up for a sequel, but we are certainly glad he did.

THE GAMES OF INDIANA JONES

Despite only appearing in three films, Indiana Jones has appeared in a surprising number of videogames. Here are just a few of them...

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK

Released: 1982, System: Atari 2600

Not only is this arguably one of the earliest videogame film licences, it's also a good adventure that perfectly captures the spirit of the movie. In fact, Steven Spielberg was so impressed with this effort that he asked the developer, Howard Scott Warshaw, to create a game based on E.T.

INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM

Released: 1985, System: Arcade, various home computers

Indy starts off whipping open the cages of captured children, then heads underground for a mine chase. Solid, unabashed fun, if a little hard.

INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS

Released: 1992, System: Amiga, DOS, Apple Macintosh, FM Towns

Superb point and click adventure with superb visuals and entertaining characters. *Atlantis* was once rumoured to be the fourth movie's script.

INDIANA JONES - GREATEST ADVENTURES

Released: 1994, System: SNES

There's a fair few *Indy* platformers available but this effort is the best. Using a similar engine to the excellent *Super Star Wars*, this is effectively all the best moments from the films and is set across 28 sprawling levels.

INDIANA JONES & HIS DESKTOP ADVENTURES

Released: 1996, System: Microsoft Windows

While a nice idea in theory – the adventure is randomly generated and designed to play whenever you have a spare five minutes – the simplistic gameplay and dull as ditchwater puzzles soon begin to grate.

INDIANA JONES & THE INFERNAL MACHINE

Released: 1999, System: Windows, N64, Game Boy Color

Fairly solid third-person arcade adventure that sees Indy teaming up with *Atlantis*'s Sophia Hapgood for a second time. A robust adventure with a selection of devious puzzles but the combat is uninspiring.

INDIANA JONES AND THE STAFF OF KINGS

Released: 2009 System: PlayStation 2, Wii, PSP Nintendo DS

LucasArts kept the details of this game pretty close to the chest before release and some issues led to the next-gen version being cancelled. Two wickedly fun LEGO games have since been released and you're much better off sticking with them for your Indy fix.

***Raiders Of The Lost Ark*'s love interest Marion Ravenwood returns in *Indy IV*.**

an icky end after he leaves Indy to die. Although it was his first ever time on a film set (his previous acting had consisted of theatre work), he vividly recalls his first day due to some rather creepy co-stars... "This man arrived with a big suitcase and inside were all these different compartments, with what looked like a tuft of straw in each. Underneath each tuft was a Tarantula. Anyway, this guy's putting spiders on me and they're more scared than I am. So they put, I don't know how many, at least a couple of dozen on me and they're not moving. I can hear Steven saying: 'Why aren't they moving? They look fake.' To which the spider wrangler replies: 'Because they're all males you see? We have to put a female in there, then they'll fight.' He puts the female spider somewhere on me and suddenly all hell breaks loose. These spiders are running and dropping and fighting and running over my face. And Steven's going, 'Shoot, shoot.' He's going, 'Alfred, Alfred, look scared.' And I'm like, 'I am scared.'"

While having dozens of eight-legged arachnids crawling over you certainly left an impression on Molina, they weren't the only animals the cast had to face, with the most memorable being the huge snake pit that Indiana and Marion are dropped into halfway through the film. Luckily, while his on-screen counterpart was absolutely terrified of the slithering reptiles, the thousands of snakes didn't faze Ford. "I personally don't have a fear of snakes, or bugs and rats for that matter, which was very fortunate," recalls Ford. "The snake sequence, however, had a lot of people very apprehensive but it didn't bother me. In the famous shot of me facing the cobra, you can barely see a reflection on the sheet of glass that was between myself and the cobra. They took some elaborate precautions on that occasion."

***Raiders* may have** had deadly snakes and spiders, but it also boasted a sharp and witty script, plenty of thrills, spills and excitement and baddies you could boo in the form of Hitler's Nazis. From the moment Jones gingerly swipes the gold idol at the

THE A-Z OF INDIANA JONES

A is for: Ark of the Covenant
Religious artefact, which, according to the Bible, housed the stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments.

B is for: Bullwhip
Indy's weapon of choice has a variety of uses, from swinging across chasms to hanging Thuggees.

C is for: Crystal Skull
The artefact Indy searches for in his fourth adventure.

D is for: Doug Lee
The voice of Indy in *Fate Of Atlantis* and *The Infernal Machine*.

E for: Elstree
Famous studio where the *Indiana Jones* movies were filmed when they weren't on location.

F is for: Fedora
Indy doesn't go anywhere without his trusty battered Fedora hat.

G is for: Gold Idol
The ancient relic that Indy retrieves at the beginning of *Raiders*.

H is for: Holy Grail
Indy's search for his father leads him on a quest to find the cup of life.

I is for: Indiana
The name of Henry Jones Jr's dog, who he was fond of.

J is for: Jordan
One of nine locations where *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade* was filmed.

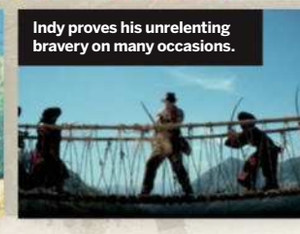
K is for: Kali
Goddess who is worshipped by the Thuggee cult in *Temple Of Doom*.

L is for: Lucas Valley
This is where Spielberg filmed *The Last Crusade*'s motorcycle chase scene.

M is for: Monkey King
Lucas tried several times to base an *Indiana Jones* film around this famous Chinese figure. It never happened.

N is for: (Tyler) Nelson
An extra from *Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull* who violated his non-disclosure

The chilled monkey brains are just out of shot...



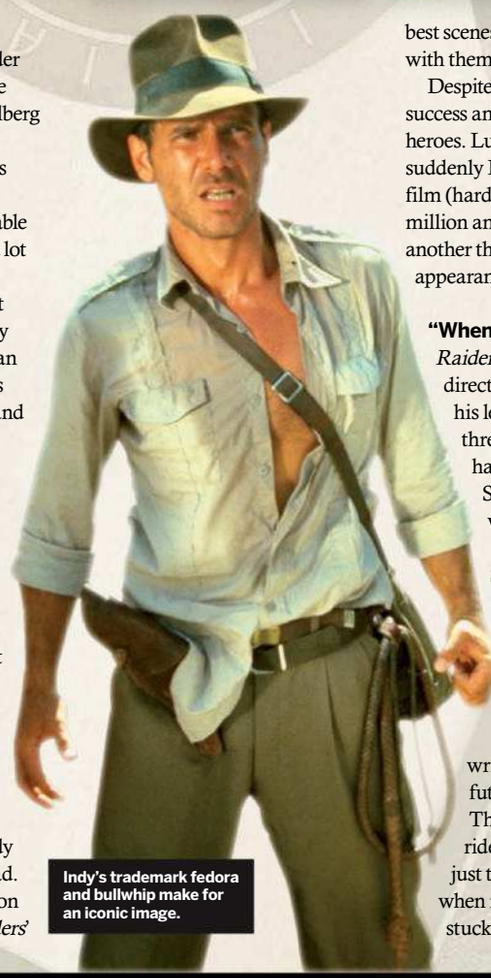
Indy proves his unrelenting bravery on many occasions.

beginning of the film – inadvertently unleashing a set piece of superb devious traps, including that memorable gigantic boulder – to the final uncovering of the actual Ark of the Covenant, the action never lets up for a second. Which is precisely what Spielberg and Lucas had originally intended. "The Return of the Great Adventure," *Raider*'s theatrical poster bravely stated and it was difficult to argue otherwise. With his battered fedora, trusty bullwhip and rugged good looks, Harrison Ford cut a memorable figure as the have-a-go hero, although it didn't come without a lot of hard graft.

"I had a bit of work to do with the whip," admits Ford about his initial preparation for *Raiders*. "So I got a fellow to come by my house and coach me in whip craft, which is a lot harder than it seems. Then I did a bit of conditioning because I knew it was going to be a physical movie." The training certainly paid off and while stuntmen were constantly on set, Ford wasn't afraid to get down and dirty, although like many of the cast he did find himself suffering from several bouts of sickness.

"We hated shooting in Tunisia. It was too hot and it would become hard to breathe," confirms Spielberg. "Plus we all started to get sick. I didn't get sick because I insisted on eating canned food from the UK. I would open my cans and would sometimes have them cold and had my breakfast, lunch and dinner from cans. All the rest of the crew who ate at the restaurants or the hotels got sick." Indeed, one of *Raiders*' most memorable sequences arrived when Ford, suffering from diarrhoea and due to partake in a lengthy fight scene with a huge guard, simply suggested if Indy could shoot him instead. The quick improvisation resulted in one of *Raiders*' best scenes, but to be fair, Spielberg's flick is absolutely filled with them.

"WITH PLENTY OF THRILLS AND SPILLS, THE ACTION NEVER LETS UP FOR A SECOND"



Indy's trademark fedora and bullwhip make for an iconic image.

Despite initial difficulties, *Raiders* went on to become a huge success and cemented Ford as one of cinema's greatest action heroes. Lucas and Spielberg had another hit on their hands, and suddenly Paramount was more than keen on making a second film (hardly surprising considering it was made for roughly $20 million and made over 12 times that amount). It would take another three years before Indy made his second cinematic appearance and once again the shoot would be far from easy…

"When George and I were in Hawaii and I agreed to direct *Raiders*, George said that if I directed the first one, I'd need to direct all three," says Spielberg when he begins to talk about his least favourite film in the canon. "He told me that he had three stories in mind. [Laughs] It turned out George did not have three stories in mind and we had to make them all up. So it was two weeks after *Raiders* opened that we knew we had to figure out *Raiders 2*."

Interestingly, while there was no real story in place, Spielberg already had plenty of ideas for the film's dramatic set pieces. He would simply carry over the ones that weren't used in Indy's previous adventure. "*Raiders Of The Lost Ark* was too super-packed with gags, stunts and sets pieces that no movie could hold all that, so certain things carried over," reveals Spielberg. "I always remember a river raft scene we had written for *Raiders* that I had saved and bookmarked for a future *Raiders* movie. That went into *Temple Of Doom*. Then we had an entire mine-car chase, like a roller coaster ride, that was originally written for *Raiders*. So I basically just took it out of *Raiders* and kept it in the drawer, and then when it came time to figure out set pieces, we dusted it off and stuck it in the end of *Temple Of Doom*." ▷▷

agreement by giving an interview to *The Edmond Sun*.

O is for: (Rick) O'Connell
The hero of *The Mummy* is obviously based on Indiana Jones, as is Eidos' *Tomb Raider* videogame heroine Lara Croft.

P is for: (River) Phoenix
River played a young Indiana in *The Last Crusade*. Sadly died of a drug overdose in November 1993.

Q is for: Quest
No *Indiana Jones* adventure is complete without Indy going on a quest for a valuable artefact.

R is for: Rating
Concerned with *Doom*'s darkness, Spielberg spoke to the MPAA who created a new PG-13 rating.

S is for: Short Round
Indy's 12-year-old sidekick from *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom*.

T is for: Thuggee
Mysterious cult that features heavily in *The Temple Of Doom*.

U is for: USA Network
The channel aired the four unseen *Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* episodes when ABC dropped the series.

V is for: Visual Effects
Temple Of Doom won an Oscar for its outstanding special effects.

W is for: (John) Williams
Famous movie composer who has scored all three of the *Indiana Jones* films.

X is for: Xavier of Bourbon-Parma
One of the many religious characters that appears in *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*.

Y is for: Young Indiana Jones Chronicles
The TV show that highlighted Indy's early adventures. Starring *Dexter* star Sean Patrick Flanery.

Z is for: (Eric) Zala
Zala, with Jayson Lamb and Chris Strompolos, created a shot-for-shot remake of *Raiders* in 1982 that took seven years to make. It was rediscovered by director Eli Roth in 2003.

The exciting mine chase was originally due to appear in *Raiders*, but there wasn't enough room for it.

There can be no denying that Indy is one of the best action heroes of all time.

Not wanting to do a direct sequel to *Raiders* (Lucas didn't want another film with Nazis in it), he eventually decided that Indy would set off to India in search of some religious artefacts called the Sankara Stones. Drafting in writers Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck because he knew that they had a great interest in India, the team soon started to put together *Doom*'s story. While Spielberg was keen to have Marion return for another adventure, it was eventually decided that each Indy film would see the intrepid adventurer with a different woman, just like James Bond and his Bond girls. Kate Capshaw (who would later go on to marry Spielberg) played nightclub singer Willie Scott, while Jonathan Ke Quan played Indy's 12-year-old sidekick, Short Round. Although the addition of both characters brought a great deal of humour to the second flick, Lucas didn't want it to follow the exact same formula of *Raiders*.

"George had one main idea," Spielberg recalls. "He said: 'It's going to be a very dark film.' The way *Empire Strikes Back* was the dark second act of his first trilogy, he wanted the second Indy film to be much darker. So George came up with this idea that it was going to be about the Kali cult and have a lot to do with black magic. I had never done anything like that before, so I kept nodding my head and saying, 'That's a good idea. I'll go along with it.'" Little did Spielberg know what he was letting himself in for…

"AFTER SEEING THE FINAL CUT, SPIELBERG REALISED DOOM WAS FAR DARKER THAN ORIGINALLY INTENDED"

***Doom* was beset** with a number of issues, such as the Indian government refusing to allow pivotal scenes being filmed (Sri Lanka was used instead), and language difficulties with some of the cast (the old man who tells Indy about the Sankara Stones is simply copying prompts from Spielberg, hence his long pauses between sentences). Perhaps the biggest problem, though, was Ford, who, despite getting in better shape than he had been for *Raiders*, ended up putting his back out while filming. "Riding elephants looks like fun, but in fact, you have to sit right astride the shoulder muscles and you sit in a position where it kind of pulls you apart," explains Ford. "I think that was the beginning of the herniation in my back."

"Harrison's back herniated when he was fighting with the Thuggee inside his suite in the Pankot Palace," continues Spielberg. "Indy flips his body back to knock the guy off and that's where his back went. Man he let out a call for help at that point. That was such a knife wound, like a stab right through his spinal cord." Lucas was back in the States at the time of Ford's accident, but as soon as he got word from Spielberg, he was immediately on a plane and arrived on location the next day.

"Harrison was in real terrible pain," Lucas recalls. "He would be on the set on a bed and they would lift him up and he'd walk ➪

HOLY SMOKE, CRASH LANDING

With so many great action scenes in all three films it's almost impossible to name our five favourites, but we're certainly going to give it a try…

Balls

Raiders has barely started and our courageous hero is already being chased by a gigantic ball that threatens to crush him at several heart-stopping moments. A truly memorable moment that kicks off the trilogy perfectly.

Truck off

Eager to get his hands back on the Ark of the Covenant, a desperate Indy finds himself chasing a convoy and leaping on to a speeding truck. Disaster strikes when the intrepid adventurer gets knocked off and dragged along the floor.

Hillside slide

With their plane about to crash, Indy, Willie Scott and Short Round leap out of the stricken bird and take a ride down a mountain via a blow-up raft. An exhilarating scene that's only topped by *Doom*'s outrageous mine cart sequence.

Mine madness

Indy, Willie and Short Round leap into a mine cart with the Thuggee cult in hot pursuit. What follows is an amazing chase sequence that's full of thrills and spills and has Indy stopping the out of control cart with his foot.

Tanks a lot

The Nazis are in a huge Tiger tank; Indiana's on a horse. Even though Dr Jones is making it all up as he goes along, you just know that huge metal monster is going to come off worse when it's all over. A truly thrilling scene.

FORTUNE AND GLORY KID, FORTUNE AND GLORY

The treasures that feature in the Indiana Jones films

CROSS OF CORONADO

Another fictional artefact, this time, one that is said to belong to Spanish conquistador Francisco Vásquez Coronado. When a private collector hires a group to recover the cross, a young Indy attempts to retrieve it but fails. He later succeeds in recovering it as an adult and delivers it to Marcus Brody's museum.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

The Ark of the Covenant is said to have been constructed by the Israelites out of shittim wood. Its purpose was to transport the stone tablets that the Ten Commandments had been inscribed upon. According to the King James Bible, the Ark manipulated the surrounding landscape and helped the Israelites to conquer the walled city of Jericho.

THE HOLY GRAIL

The first instances of Grail lore hark back to the French poet Chrétien de Troyes, who wrote *The Story Of The Grail* in 1188. The Grail is said to grant immortality to whoever drinks from it, while water from it can be spilt to heal wounds and other maladies. It is said to have been the cup from which Jesus Christ drunk from at the Last Supper.

REMAINS OF NURHACHI

Nurhachi was a border chieftain who helped defeat the Japanese for money and supplies and eventually went on to be the founding father of China's Manchu state. He died from battle wounds in 1626 and his remains where then stolen in 1903. According to *Doom*, his remains were stolen by thieves in 1903 and Jones recovered them 32 years later for Lao Che.

GOLDEN IDOL

While not real, the Gold Idol that Indiana Jones retrieves at the beginning on *Raiders* is based on an actual Aztec statue. Known as the Goddess of Obsterics, it is said to improve fertility.

HEADPIECE TO THE STAFF OF RA

This fictional headpiece played a big part in *Raiders*, as it helps reveal the location of the Ark of the Covenant. The headpiece has inscriptions on it, which reveal where it needs to be placed in the map room at Tanis. The sun will then hit the headpiece's jewel and reveal the Well of Souls' location.

SANKARA STONES

Unlike some of the artefacts found in the *Indiana Jones* world, the Sankara Stones are not actually real. They are, however, based on Shiva Lingas, sacred symbols of the Hindu God Shiva. The Sankara Stones are similar to fixed lingas, which are created and installed after a specific location. Should these religious artefacts be taken, great calamity will befall the land.

IT'S NOT JUST INDIANA JONES WHO'S A DARING GLOBETROTTER; HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE LOCATIONS WHERE SPIELBERG AND HIS CREW FILMED IN ORDER TO BRING YOU THE FANTASTIC TRILOGY

FILM RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK

01 Location Fern Grotto/ Hulei'a Stream, Kauai, Hawaii
Scene shot Opening exteriors of the temple of the Chachapoyan Indians in the jungles of South America
02 Locations Kairouan; Tozeur; Nefta
Scenes shot (Kairouan) Sallah's House, Arab bar and market street scenes in Cairo, Egypt. (Tozeur) Archaeological digs and Ark of the Covenant procession in Tanis, Egypt. (Nefta) Flying wing and truck chase

03 Location La Rochelle, France
Scenes shot The Nazi submarine hideout, Wurffler submarine and Bantu Wind steamer exteriors
04 Location Elstree Studios, Borehamwood, England
Scenes shot The Temple, the Map room, Well of Souls, Raven Bar, the Altar

FILM INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM

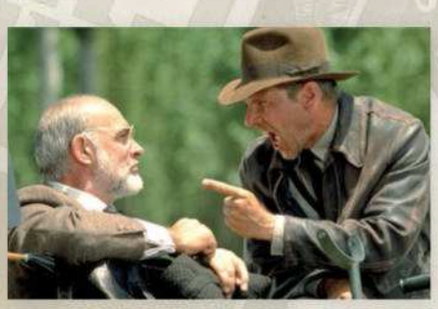
05 Location Rua de Felicidade, Inner Harbour, Macau, China
Scene shot Car chase in Shanghai
06 Locations Hantane Tea Estate; Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage, Kandy, Sri Lanka
Scenes shot (Hantane Tea Estate) Mayapur Village, an Indian village ca 1935

(Elephant Orphanage) Riding to Pankot

FILM INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

07 Location Seven-Mile Canyon, Arches National Park, Moab, Utah
Scene shot Opening scene with boy scouts in the desert of Utah
08 Location Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad (C&TS), N.M.
Scene shot Circus train chase (desert landscape)
09 Location Durango-Silverton Narrow Guage Railroad, Colo
Scene shot Circus train chase (hilly landscape)
04 Location Tilbury Docks,

Essex, England
Scenes shot Venice speedboat chase scenes
11 Location Castle Bürresheim, Rheinland-Pfalz, Mayen, Germany
Scene shot Castle Brunwald, where the secret Nazi base was located
12 Location Ranch in Clyde, Texas (near Amarillo)
Scene shot Riding off into the sunset in Jordan



Nazis are *Raiders*' villain of choice. *Crystal Skull* features the Russians.

"THE THIRD FILM BENEFITS GREATLY FROM SEAN'S PRESENCE. IT ELEVATED EVERYBODY'S GAME"

through it, then they'd get him back on the bed." Realising that filming couldn't continue this way, Lucas had Harrison flown out to Los Angeles where he had papaya enzyme surgery performed. With Ford absent, Spielberg had little choice but to use Ford's stuntman, Vic Armstrong, in order to shoot certain scenes.

Perhaps the biggest issue Spielberg faced, though, was the content of the actual film. After seeing the final cut, Spielberg suddenly realised that it was far darker than he had originally intended. Sure, it was filled with the sort of exuberant, over-the-top stunts and set pieces that were typical of the franchise, but it also included flaming skewers through chests, a heart-ripping sequence, a sinister evil cult and other close to the knuckle sequences. Despite the above, *Doom* still ended up receiving the universally popular PG rating. Much to the surprise of Spielberg.

"We did not get an R rating, we got a PG rating, but it created a tremendous controversy," he remembers. "People talked more about how inappropriate it was for younger children. I felt there should be a rating in between PG and R. So I called Jack Valenti, the head of the Motion Picture Association Of America, and said: 'Can't there be an in-between rating?' And I actually said: 'It could be like a PG-14 or PG-13.' The next thing I heard, Jack Valenti was able to institute, for the first time in many decades, a brand new rating."

Despite its dark tone and nature, *Doom* was only marginally less successful than *Raiders* and ended up taking only $30 million less than *Raiders* – its $179,870,271 gross placed it just behind *Ghostbusters* and *Beverly Hills Cop* for most successful film of 1984. Despite this success, it remains one of Spielberg's least favourite films. "I look back on *Temple Of Doom*, and I say: 'The greatest thing that I got out of that movie was that I met Kate Capshaw, and we were married.' So even though Indiana Jones ended up getting the girl, I really did."

After the gloominess of *Doom*, Spielberg and Lucas decided that Indy's third outing needed to return to its roots. "For *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade* I just wanted to bring back the spirit of the original, have some fun," explains Spielberg. As a result Elliott Denham's Marcus Brody came back in a larger role, and Davis's Sallah also returned. Arguably the real masterstroke of

The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles took on a more educational stance.

HENRY JONES JUNIOR

The further, alright, earlier adventures of Indiana Jones

When the *Indiana Jones* films were being filmed, George Lucas was asked so many stories about Indy's background that Spielberg and Lucas decided to visit Jones's youth in *The Last Crusade*. Featuring River Phoenix, it proved to be an excellent addition to the franchise and provided the inspiration to create a TV series.

The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles appeared three years later but it wasn't the show that many fans were expecting. That's not to say it wasn't very good, of course, just that it was very different to the movies. For starters Harrison Ford and River Phoenix displayed no interest in reprising their film roles (although Ford later relented and played a 50-year-old Indy in 'The Mystery Of The Blues'). Then there was the fact that *Chronicles* was far more educational than the films and lacked the exciting set pieces that had made the movies so enjoyable. It also featured three different Joneses: Indy aged nine (played by Corey Carrier), a teenage Indy (Sean Patrick Flanery), and Indy at the age of 93 (George Hall). Although Lucas's original ambition was to make history fun, many of the historical figures that Indy met were crude caricatures that undermined Lucas's early intentions.

Despite this, *Chronicles* garnered plenty of critical acclaim and received ten Emmys. However, the show faced a struggle for survival and fell far short of the 70 episodes Lucas had planned. ABC originally agreed to air the show but never ran the full series, and left 12 episodes unaired. The show eventually bowed out in 1996 but that wasn't the end.

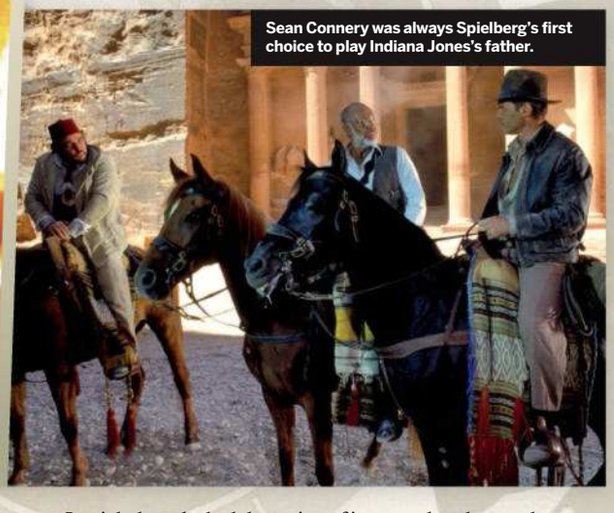
Renowned for his tinkering with the *Star Wars* trilogy, Lucas performed similar surgery on his treasured TV show. The series was re-edited into 23 TV movies and renamed as *The Adventures Of Young Indiana Jones*.

You can catch up with the young Indy again with the three volumes of his adventures that have been released on DVD.

A QUICK LOOK AT THE KEY CHARACTERS OF THE YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLES

Sean Patrick Flanery – Indiana Jones
George Hall – Dr Henry 'Indiana' Jones Jr
Corey Carrier – Henry 'Indiana' Jones Jr
Ronny Coutteure – Remy
Margaret Tyzack – Miss Seymour
Lloyd Owen – Professor Henry Jones Sr
Ruth de Sosa – Anna Jones

The addition of Sean Connery in the role of Professor Henry Jones brought a great deal of comedy to *The Last Crusade*.



Sean Connery was always Spielberg's first choice to play Indiana Jones's father.

The Last Crusade, though, is the addition of Sean Connery as Indy's disapproving father. His portrayal of Henry Jones Senior is utterly convincing, even though the Scot was initially wary of taking on the role.

"At first Sean had resisted the idea of playing my father," explains Ford. "He's only 12 years older than I, and felt the character was too thinly drawn. He's a great student of history, so he brought a lot of ideas to George and Steven, which were incorporated into his character. He is less Yoda-like than originally thought of and quite the match for his son, in many ways." Indeed, it's the sparring between Ford and Connery that adds greatly to *Crusade*'s charm, although the late River Phoenix also added a memorable turn with his portrayal of a young Henry Jones Junior.

"Well I loved River's work, especially in *Stand By Me*, and I think Harrison was the one who actually suggested River to me," explains Spielberg. "He said: 'The guy that looks most like me at that age is River Phoenix.' I met up with River, thought he was great and cast him." Re-visiting Indy's youth not only gave fans another exhilarating opening sequence, it also revealed many of the facets of Jones himself, from how he got his scar, to why he's so morbidly afraid of snakes.

Lucas wanted Indy's third adventure to be set in a haunted castle (which was also an early pitch for *Doom*) but Spielberg wasn't keen due to his recent work on *Poltergeist*. Lucas suggested the Holy Grail as the film's focal point, which Spielberg agreed to, providing that he could focus more on the relationship between the two Joneses – something that Ford was more than happy with. "I was a strong proponent of the idea of bringing Indiana Jones's father into the story and showing some new aspects of his character that we hadn't seen in the first two films," confirms Ford. "The third film benefits greatly from Sean's presence. It elevated everybody's game. I think it's by far the most sophisticated in many ways. And it was maybe the most fun of all of them because it had great locations and great physical sequences."

The many exotic locations and constant struggle to keep hold of Henry Jones Senior's Grail diary (which in turn revealed the location of the Grail) meant that *The Last Crusade* had essentially become a chase movie. However, it was a chase movie that gloriously cartwheeled from one stunning set piece to the next. Despite its set pieces not quite having the grandeur of previous adventures – although Indy's battle to liberate his father from the belly of a steel beast almost clinches it – it's the eventual reconciliation of Jones Junior and Senior that Spielberg argues is the main thrill of *Crusade*. "It's redemption of the soul, redemption between father and son," explains Spielberg about the film's main appeal. "*Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*, thematically, is about personal leaps of faith, one leap of faith after another."

It might have lacked the action of its peers, but that made little difference to audiences and while *Crusade* didn't take as much money in the US as *Raiders* had, globally it was the most successful film in the trilogy, raking in a staggering $474 million.

It may have been originally planned as a trilogy, but that didn't stop Spielberg, Lucas and Ford teaming together again to work on a fourth outing. *Indiana Jones And The Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull* was released in May 2008 and reunited Harrison Ford with Karen Allen and introducing new sidekick in the form of Ray Winstone and Indiana and Marion's son, Mutt, played by Shia LaBeouf. Reception of the film aside, there will be a fifth and sixth run at Indy, to be released under the Disney-LucasFilm brand since Lucas' retirement.

"I think audiences like a character who is both academic and an adventurer," ponders Spielberg about Indy's runaway success. "I think what's probably the most important part of this character is his tenacity, his unwillingness to give up, his zeal for the hunt and the pleasure that he takes in going to amazing places, seeing bizarre and amazing things and solving the mysteries that lay before him." Long may it continue.

The **INDIANA JONES THE COMPLETE ADVENTURES** boxset is available on Blu-ray from Paramount

THE SPIN-OFFS OF INDIANA JONES

As well as appearing in many game adaptations, comic books and novels, there's also been an Indy role-playing game and choose you own adventure books. Perhaps most famous, though, are the attractions that have been based on the hero.

'Indiana Jones Epic Stunt Spectacular' opened in 1989. It shows several spectacular stunts from the films and also reveals how they were achieved. It is still running today at the Disney-MGM studios. 'George Lucas' Super Live Adventure', on the other hand, toured Japan in 1993 and consisted of sequences from the *Indy* films and other Lucas projects such as *Star Wars*.

Then there are three rides to consider. Based at Disneyland Paris, 'Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Peril' weaves in an out of an old excavation and features a 360-degree loop, while 'Temple Of The Forbidden Eye' is a complex ride that features different locations, such as the Tunnel of Torment and a Bug Room. It is based at Disneyland. The final ride is found at Tokyo DisneySea and has a similar storyline to 'Temple Of The Forbidden Eye'. This time, Indy is looking for the Fountain of Youth.

Did *The Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull* maintain Indiana Jones's appeal?

THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL MIND OF JIM HENSON OPENS A DOOR TO A WORLD OF FANTASY

LABYRINTH

Film

101 mins // 1986
Director Jim Henson
Cast Jennifer Connelly, David Bowie, Toby Froud

About

Taking its influences from sources as varied as *Alice In Wonderland*, *The Wizard Of Oz* and Maurice Sherak's *Where The Wild Things Are*, *Labyrinth* was penned by Jim Henson, Dennis Lee and former Monty Pythoner Terry Jones and released in 1986. On a budget of $25 million, it only pulled in $13 million during its theatrical run and received a lukewarm reception from critics. It has since gone on to earn a place in the hearts of movie lovers who have embraced it as a highly original and decidedly Eighties-tinged fantasy film, brimming over with sparkle and creativity – not to mention some of the most weirdly inventive creatures ever to grace the screen.

After working together on the critically lauded and much-loved *Dark Crystal*, Jim Henson and longtime friend and collaborator Brian Froud were throwing around ideas for their next picture. "Goblins," Froud offered and with that simple, one-word premise, Labyrinth was born.

The artist and designer envisioned a small baby sitting, alone, surrounded by goblins and this formed the jumping off point to which a teenaged Jennifer Connelly, an oh-so British sounding David Bowie, all manner of Henson creations and, of course, the most Eighties-sounding of all the Eighties movie soundtracks, would be added.

"He first brought me the concept [for the film] on the 1983 tour I did," Bowie says, reflecting on his introduction to the movie. "He showed me Brian Froud's artwork, and he showed me a copy of *The Dark Crystal*, which I found fascinating, and I could see the potential to make that kind of movie, with humans, with songs, and more of a lighter comedy edge." *Labyrinth* was certainly lighter in tone than *Dark Crystal*; it was an adventure tale aimed towards the kids, but it had more than its fair share of Henson-esque oddities and weird creations. It was Froud's designs, though, that proved the initial impetus for the film in its first stages of production, and were a particular inspiration for former Monty Python member Terry Jones, one of the film's three credited screenwriters.

"I sat at my desk with Brian's drawings stacked on one side and I'd be writing away to see what would happen," Jones recalls, with great enthusiasm of his involvement. "Every time I came to a new scene and I needed something to happen, I'd look through Brian's drawings and find a character that spoke to me and suddenly there was the scene."

The film was the most outlandish and ambitious undertaking yet for Jim Henson and his team, which saw them working on their biggest 'canvas', incorporating real-life actors with puppets and musical numbers among its tale of adventure and mystery. Envisaged as a journey inspired by the likes of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *The Wizard Of Oz*, *Labyrinth* sees its protagonist Sarah encounter all manner of exotic beasties and surreal landscapes in her search for her baby brother Toby, who has been kidnapped by the Goblin King Jareth, and imprisoned in the castle at the heart of the goblin city. Braving her way through Jareth's labyrinth, with just thirteen hours on the clock until Toby becomes one of the goblins himself forever more, Sarah befriends all kinds of creatures and finds herself face to face with all sorts of challenges, driven on by the love for her sibling. Cockney worms dispense helpful advice on how exactly to navigate the labyrinth, while the lumbering Ludo, a beast who would give Chewbacca cause for concern, and Sir Didymus, a brave yet often rather ineffectual fox-goblin aided by his fearful steed Ambrosius, join Sarah in her plight to save her brother. Hoggle, a well-meaning but easily bullied goblin also befriends Sarah and helps her fight her way to the centre of the labyrinth, where she encounters more bizarre and outrageous creations, the likes of which only Henson and his team could create. The puppetry and set design, outstanding as they were, would not have had the same impact were it not for the casting of the human roles.

"GOBLINS," FROUD OFFERED AND WITH THAT PREMISE, *LABYRINTH* WAS BORN

A pop star was sought for the role of Jareth and three names were shortlisted: there was Michael Jackson (could you really imagine the king of pop presiding over a land of goblins?), Sting (too foppish, by half) and David Bowie, who was Henson's first choice from the outset. Bowie was cast not just to play the part but to write the film's songs as well. The star worked with dance choreographer Michael Moschen to come up with the film's musical set pieces, and was even called upon to provide gurgling noises for Toby when the infant actor 'refused' to provide his own! In hindsight it is hard to imagine anyone else playing the role other than Bowie; he has become synonymous with both the film and the part.

During the Eighties, Bowie was at the height of his musical fame, if perhaps not the height of his songwriting abilities, and he brought a star power to the movie that lifted it up, raising its profile as more than just a movie with a bunch of puppets. His hair and make-up design for the film may have paled in comparison to his own self-styled Ziggy Stardust persona from the previous decade, but he nonetheless brought an extravagance and a debauched, occasionally quite malevolent, presence to the proceedings. A childrens' film it may be, but there is something quite unsettling about Bowie's performance. "He's the goblin king, but you get the feeling he is rather reluctant [about it], that he has inherited it and that he would rather be down in Soho," Bowie says of his understanding of the character. Speaking of his actual approach to creating the final performance, he says: "Jim gave me freedom to say the things that I wanted to, and to write the things that I wanted to."

Henson's creations mix with elaborate sets in this film.

THE LABYRINTH LEGACY

We look at the impact the film had on its stars and genre

DAVID BOWIE

Bowie has appeared in a number of science fiction and fantasy films, but the role of Jareth is perhaps his most loved, and most well-remembered, alongside turns in *The Man Who Fell To Earth* and, more recently, Christopher Nolan's *The Prestige*, in which he played the infamous inventor Nikola Tesla.

Bowie's next role was Pontius Pilate in Scorsese's controversial *The Last Temptation Of Christ*.

JENNIFER CONNELLY

In 1986, she was a sixteen-year-old and *Labyrinth* was only her fourth ever film role. Fast forward more than 20 years and Connelly is an Oscar-winning actress and one of Hollywood's biggest stars, with turns in *A Beautiful Mind*, *Requiem For A Dream*, *Hulk*, *Dark Water* and, of course, *The Rocketeer*, to her name.

Connelly's most recent work sees her starring opposite Russell Crowe in *Noah*.

THE WITCHES

The late Jim Henson wrote, produced, appeared in and directed an extraordinary amount of TV shows and movies, but *Labyrinth* remains an example of his best work. It has influenced movies such as the 1990 film adaptation, which he produced, of Roald Dahl's *The Witches* – a similarly terrifying kids' movie.

The Witches was the last film to be personally overseen by Jim Henson.

ESCAPIST, ABSURDIST CHILDRENS' ENTERTAINMENT

Labyrinth pulls together so many genres, so many types of entertainment and so many fashions into one, extravagant whole, that childrens' films had a lot to live up to in its wake. It pushed the boundaries for what could be achieved, and what should be attempted.

The resurgence of stop-motion animation can be seen as an influence of *Labyrinth* and Henson.

THE POWER OF THE DARK CRYSTAL / FRAGGLE ROCK: THE MOVIE

Both *The Power of the Dark Crystal* and *Fraggle Rock: The Movie* have been announced in various states of pre-production and were slated for release in 2011. The fact that such movies are still being discussed is a testament to the enduring magic of Henson's creations.

***Star Wars – The Clone Wars*' Tartakovsky is slated to direct *The Power of the Dark Crystal*.**

This beast actually becomes one of Sarah's companions.

The casting of the role of Sarah was equally as important, and would make or break the film. "When you're casting a part like Sarah, you hope someone walks through the door and is the right person," Henson said when interviewed on set at the time of filming, "and Jenny (Connelly) walked in… she did a wonderful reading, she is a bright and intelligent actress who takes direction well and it was just right." Jennifer Connelly was then an unknown teenaged actress with only a small number of movie appearances to her name, but *Labyrinth*, a leading role in which she carried the film, and which required her to act opposite, for the most part, puppets of various shapes, sizes, and guises, was her toughest test by a long way. Which makes it all the more surprising that she never really fancied herself as an actress. "It wasn't one of my aspirations to be an actress," she said at the time, an opinion she may have come to update in light of her subsequent Hollywood success. "I wanted to be a vet, or a carpenter – I didn't really know what I wanted to be, but I never thought I wanted to be in films." As Sarah, Connelly brought both a steely assuredness and a naive vulnerability. It was her wish for her brother to be taken away in the first place that enabled the goblins to snatch Toby, an exclamation driven by the responsibilities her parents thrust upon her at such a young age.

THE PUPPETRY AND SET DESIGN WOULD NOT HAVE HAD THE SAME IMPACT WERE IT NOT FOR THE CASTING

Henson later admitted that he didn't at first appreciate the physical demands of the shoot and what it would entail for its young actress, but that Connelly threw herself with gusto into everything that was asked of her, whether it be hanging suspended above the Bog Of Eternal Stench or plummeting 40-odd foot down the shaft of hands. It seemed, however, that no one had quite appreciated the scale of the production that was to go ahead… Filming with so many puppets, sometimes as many as thirty in a single scene, provided Henson and his crew with all manner of obstacles to overcome. Hoggle, Sarah's Gollum-like companion in (un)reliability, required no fewer than five people to operate – one inside the costume, and four outside, controlling the eighteen motors that operated every facial expression and eyebrow movement of the intricately designed headpiece. A juggler was brought in to perform the crystal ball scenes that Bowie himself couldn't perform, but by far and away the most complicated scene to film was the *Dance Magic* scene in the goblin castle. "It was a big scene," Brian Henson recalled of the musical number, "There were 48 puppets and maybe 52, 53 puppeteers on that set. It was really fun getting that scene done, but really crazy too. In the planning there was only supposed to be 20 characters, 20 puppets, but we went on set and looked at it and realised it needed a lot more than

MAGICAL MOMENTS

The best scenes in Labyrinth

Labyrinth is chock-full of weird and bizarre standout moments. Discuss them and share your own personal favourites at www.scifinow.co.uk/forum

THE CLEANERS

Jareth decides that the dizzying labyrinth isn't enough for Sarah to contend with and promptly runs down the clock a bit more. Then, as penance for Hoggle helping her, he brings on a group of cleaners whose sharp-ended contraption bears down on them in the confines of a tunnel.

Hogwart is just one of the many names Hoggle is called during the course of the movie.

THE HELPING HANDS

Trying to make her way to the goblin city, Sarah encounters the Helping Hands. Tumbling down a tunnel, the hands grab her and request whether she wants to go up or down, all the while making bizarre hand-formed faces. Exceedingly creepy.

The hands were Terry Jones's idea, to which Jim Henson suggested they should form faces.

THE BOG OF ETERNAL STENCH

Not only does the bog contain the most hideous of smells, but if one so much as puts a solitary foot into it, they will be tainted with its heinous smell forever more. Not a good thing then when the bridge collapses as Sarah is crossing it, leaving Ludo and his rock-pals to save the day.

A camera was hidden in Ludo's right horn relaying images to a screen in his belly for his operator.

that. And so the week before we had to find additional people."

Thankfully though, the design process that Henson and Froud employed for the production helped out when these obstacles were faced, and a sense of collaboration was fostered on the set where everyone felt that their input was valued and appreciated. "Working with Brian becomes more of a creative dialogue," goblin armour designer Mike McCormick enthused at the time. "Rather than being given a design and told 'make this', we have incredible freedom and range of creative expression to pursue something ourselves, and Brian incorporates that with his designs." Froud rarely made finished designs for the film, instead constantly working with 'works in progress' where ideas would be knocked around, each department throwing in their own two cents, and creature designs morphing and developing organically rather than adhering to any rigid instructions passed down from the top.

Despite this family-vibe which permeated the set, and the blood, sweat and tears that went into the film's production, it failed to set the box office alight when it was released. Recouping just half of its production budget during its theatrical run, it was deemed a flop by the industry, with critics remaining remarkably indifferent too. But the film by no means stopped there. It has since gone on not only to find a devoted audience, but also to be embraced by precisely the critics and industry players who dismissed it in the first place. There is a certain nostalgic appeal to *Labyrinth* today, that is for sure, with its Eighties synth-pop, fashion and hairstyles, but the film has recently been praised for exactly the reasons that audiences fell in love with it in the first place – its unbridled creativity, stunning design and jaw-dropping puppetry. Or, as Terry Jones puts it himself: "I can't bring myself to call them puppets, because what Jim Henson does isn't puppetry, there's no name for it, it is some other kind of magic!"

LABYRINTH is available on Blu-ray from Sony Pictures Entertainment

LABYRINTHIAN CHOICE

In the wake of the film's success, a wealth of *Labyrinth* tie-in merchandise appeared, including a novelisation by ACH Smith, a three-issue comic series by Marvel Comics, a soundtrack album featuring tracks by David Bowie, and a videogame based on the movie. The film was also referenced in the *Muppet Babies* episode 'Nice To Have A Gnome Like You' in which Miss Piggy takes on the role of Sarah for a similar story, and Tokyopop released a four-episode manga-styled comic book series too.

Why is Labyrinth a 'modern sci-fi classic'?

Henson magic
The wonderful goblins and assorted creatures that make up *Labyrinth* are the main draw for audiences, and are what the film is most remembered for. Daring, outlandish, highly original, and with that Henson mixture of charm, humour and the hint of something darker lurking underneath, they enchanted and enthralled a generation.

It's a scary kids' film
Intended for a young audience, it's one hell of a trip, with an assortment of creepy imagery and characters to encounter, notoriously the squirm-inducing helping hands, and the sinister junk lady.

Product of its times
Undeniably an Eighties film – *Labyrinth* can neither hide from or ignore this fact – this is part of the reason why it is held in such beloved affection by legions of movie lovers.

Jareth
Bowie excels as the Goblin King with a creepy and almost reptilian performance that is matched only by his cracking make-up and bouffant hair.

Ludo
This hulking beast has to be our face of the bunch – morose, with a natural affinity for his friends, afraid of battle, but yet totally loveable too.

GOBLIN BATTLE

Once inside the goblin city, Sarah's plight to save her brother from the goblin king is far from over. Ludo, Sir Didymus and Hoggle do battle, with Ludo climbing to the top of one of the homesteads and bellowing out, summoning his rock friends to help once more.

T Milk bottles can quickly be seen outside the door to the Goblin City before the goblin battle begins.

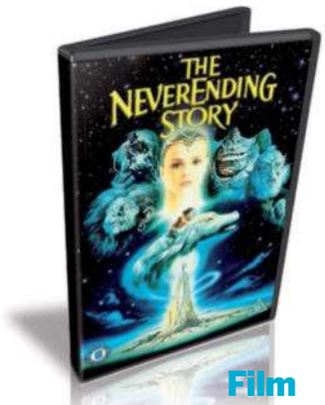
UPSIDE DOWN, INSIDE OUT

Finally making it to the goblin city, Sarah faces her final encounter with Jareth, whose optical illusion-esque castle poses all manner of problems, not least which way is up and which way is down. It's a visual feast, boasting stunning set design.

T Several stunt doubles were used for these shots, in which Bowie defies the laws of gravity.

ONE OF THE MOST FONDLY REMEMBERED FILMS FOR CHILDREN OF THE EIGHTIES, THE NEVERENDING STORY HAS BECOME A CULT FAVOURITE OVER THE YEARS. BUT IT'S NOT JUST A THROWAWAY KIDS' FLICK, ITS DARK THEMES AND CREATURE EFFECTS MAKE IT ONE TO COME BACK TO TIME AND AGAIN. WE TELL YOU WHY THIS TALE OF ANOTHER WORLD, WHERE HOPES AND DREAMS COME TO LIFE, IS ONE OF FANTASY'S MODERN CLASSICS

THE NEVERENDING STORY



Film

94 mins // 6 April 1984
Director Wolfgang Petersen
Writers Michael Ende (novel), Wolfgang Petersen, Herman Weigel
Cast Noah Hathaway, Barret Oliver, Tami Stronach

About

We meet Bastian shortly after his mother's death, when he stumbles across a special book and becomes absorbed in its tale of another world. As Fantasia is faced with 'The Nothing', a threat that is consuming its land, child warrior Atreyu is sent to stop this force. He is told by the Southern Oracle that he must find a human child, who needs to give the Empress a new name. It's not long before we realise that this is not just your average book, and Bastian is no mere bystander – he is, in fact, the human child that can save the day. With only seconds to spare before Fantasia is destroyed, Bastian shouts out the new name and is transported to this magical land, where his hopes and dreams will now keep the world alive.

"The video arcade is down the street. Here we just sell small rectangular objects. They're called books. They require a little effort on your part, and make no bee-bee-bee-bee-beeps. On your way please." If you, like our young protagonist Bastian, managed to defiantly ignore the shopkeeper's threats and flew away with this epic saga, you too would have experienced one of the Eighties' finest fantasy achievements. *The Neverending Story* was so rich in its creation of a mystical world and the creatures within that it wholeheartedly deserves its place as a Modern Classic, and it's one with so much more to it than initially meets the eye.

Bastian's tale is, in fact, a story within a story – a heroic expedition told alongside a coming of age, personal journey. As this little boy with his head in the clouds comes across *The Neverending Story* at his local bookstore, we hide away alongside him as he gets wrapped up in the tale of Fantasia, a land of magical creatures and fantastic places. But it's not long before the action kicks in and we discover that Fantasia is being threatened by 'The Nothing', a force that is consuming absolutely everything in its path. The Childlike Empress calls upon the great young warrior Atreyu to find a way to defeat this life-sucking force before it's too late. So far, so standard, but before long we realise that Bastian is not just an idle reader, but is innately connected to this mythical land, and only he can save them. As the Empress explains: "He has suffered with you. He went through everything you went through, and now, he has come here with you. He is very close... listening to every word, we say." And the same can be said for us as an audience, as we become equally as involved in the happenings unravelling before us.

Mostly shot in Munich's Bavaria Studios in the summer of 1983, *The Neverending Story* began production with a $27 million budget, one of the biggest ever seen for a movie made outside of the US or USSR. Based on Michael Ende's 1979 novel *Die Unendliche Geschichte*, this adaptation made a great many changes to the source, particularly in regards to the film ending about halfway through the book's narrative. Other liberties are seen in the name change of Fantastica to the adaptation's Fantasia, and by no longer portraying Bastian as overweight and Atreyu as having blue hair and green skin. According to Noah Hathaway, the actor who played the child warrior, the make-up department had tried painting him green, but it didn't quite work in a visual context: "It wasn't believable. I looked like fungi!" Hathaway mused.

The changes made to the narrative, however, did not go down too well with the novel's author, who decided he would rather have his name removed from the credits than be associated with this version of his idea. Ende even went as far as to request the studio halt production or change the name of the film, but his attempt to sue the producers failed, and his name is still found as a small credit at the end.

This, unfortunately, was not the only hitch that *The Neverending Story* experienced, as Noah Hathaway faced many dangerous situations throughout production. In particular, during the Swamp of Sadness drowning sequence, the actor was pulled under water by the very equipment that was supposed to portray his on-screen sinking, leaving him unconscious by the time he was pulled to the surface.

The unfortunate actor also nearly lost an eye during his final showdown with the G'mork, as one of the claws poked him in the face and the weight of the robot hit him to the ground, causing him to lose his breath. There was only one take of this scene because of the risks involved.

Add in the fact that Germany's hottest summer in 25 years had plagued the set

"ONE OF THE EIGHTIES' FINEST FANTASIES, THE NEVERENDING STORY WAS RICH IN ITS CREATION OF A MYSTICAL WORLD"

Artax is initially Atreyu's only companion on this epic quest, making his death reiterate this world's despair.

The world building in this film adaptation is truly excellent.

MAGIC MOMENTS

The best bits from Neverending Story

"ARTAX, YOU'RE SINKING!"

Easily the film's standout moment, when Atreyu's horse, Artax, succumbs to the swamp's sadness and lets himself sink to his death, there's not a dry eye in the house. This is a truly heartbreaking moment that begins to show the dark route this quest will go down and highlighting the importance of the boy's mission.

Actor Noah Hathaway was hurt after he was thrown off his horse and stepped on.

"NEVER GIVE UP AND LUCK WILL FIND YOU"

As Atreyu sinks in the swamp, we catch the first glimpse of one of the film's most endearing characters, the Luck Dragon Falkor. As he soars through the sky, the impressive creature effects are first revealed and we are introduced to this charming character in style.

You can 'ride' on Falkor's back on location at the Bavaria Filmplatz in Munich, Germany.

"BE CONFIDENT!"

As Atreyu reaches the Sphinx Gates to gain advice from The Southern Oracle, we watch as the Sphinx's eyes open and blast deadly beams out at a knight passing by (all because they do not "feel their own worth"). Atreyu boldly walks through in the film's most tense moment, past the singed knight dead on the floor and skulls scattered everywhere, proving he's one of the bravest kids around.

Noah Hathaway went on to star in the fantasy film *Troll*, as a character called Harry Potter Jr.

"COME FOR ME, G'MORK!"

As Atreyu comes face to face with the creature that's been hunting him, G'mork tells him, and the audience, that Fantasia is actually "the world of human fantasies" and it is dying because people have stopped dreaming. As the warrior reveals who he is by boldly shouting "I am Atreyu!", the beast leaps forwards and the boy stabs him, leaving us breathless alongside him.

There's a band called Atreyu, who do an intriguing metal cover of *You Give Love A Bad Name*.

"MOONCHILD!"

As G'mork's revelations tick through our minds, The Empress says that Atreyu has brought the human with him that can save their soon to be consumed land. She looks straight at the camera and says "Bastian, call my name!" with tears rolling down her cheeks. At the last second, Bastian calls her new name into the storm and is whisked away to this other world in the movie's defining moment.

The incomprehensible new name that Bastian shouts out into the night is 'Moonchild'.

The kooky Engywook tries to advise the boy.

The court is taken aback by the famous warrior's youth.

(with statues of the Ivory Tower melting and the crew shutting down production due to blue backgrounds for matte work not operating properly) and you have a shoot full of complications. However, a few hiccups like these could not keep this film from becoming one of the most visually impressive, immersive experiences of cinema at the time.

Director Wolfgang Petersen gathered together conceptual artists from across Europe to create the magic world at the centre of his film, and together they conjured up a unique look full of surreal imagery and imagination. From the Ivory Towers, Howling Forest and Swamp of Sadness, each locale is varied and distinct, and breathtaking to behold even in today's world of CGI and greenscreen tinkering. Future *RoboCop* cinematographer Jost Vacano did an excellent job on *The Neverending Story*, creating a dark and brooding atmosphere that seeped through the fantasy land on screen and the creature effects were unparalleled at the time, too.

"THE ORIGINAL STILL HOLDS UP AS A MATURE TALE OF PURE IMAGINATION TODAY, RIFE WITH COMPELLING AND CREATIVE CHARACTERISATION"

A number of distinctive beings were passed on Atreyu's travels, from people with four faces, to rock-biters, racing snails and Morla the wise turtle, and all of these were impeccably designed. Falkor the Luck Dragon, for instance, was actually a 43-foot long motorised creature made by Guiseppe Tortura, with the mask designed by Arthur Collin. It had 6,000 plastic scales and took many technicians to control its movement. Similarly impressive was the head made for G'mork, which had the ability to make 59 separate movements to imitate speech and was controlled by 17 people. All of this may be taken for granted today, but at the time this was cutting-edge stuff, adding to the spectacle of this fantasy journey.

But it certainly isn't just the visual wonder of this film that makes it such an achievement, it's the brave and bold way that it faces up to dark themes and imagery within a children's flick. The shopkeeper warns Bastian from the very start that this is not the usual children's story: "Your books are safe… afterwards you get to be a little boy again." It's true to say that *The Neverending Story*, fictional book and filmic property, was certainly not safe; instead it focused on sinister and scary motifs, dealing with hard issues for a kids' adventure. From Artax drowning (involving

FANTASIA'S FOLK

The main characters of the fantasy dream land

Wish this story had never ended? Share your memories at scifinow.co.uk/forum

THE SAVIOUR

Bastian likes to escape to the fantasies in his head – that is until one of those fantasies comes very much alive. Tasked with saving a world, without realising it, Bastian learns about the nature of this book alongside us as a questioning audience. The part was played by Barret Oliver, who would go on to portray the titular robot in *D.A.R.Y.L.*

Barret Oliver now teaches photography in Los Angeles.

THE WARRIOR

The bravest warrior in all of Fantasia, Atreyu may be small in stature, but he is big in heart. As the only person who can stop The Nothing, he has the weight of the land on his shoulders and the G'mork after him for this same reason. Played by a 12-year-old Noah Hathaway, Atreyu's determination gives a sense of hope to the film's otherwise gloomy outlook.

Noah Hathaway played Boxey in the Seventies *Battlestar Galactica*.

THE LUCK DRAGON

Falkor is the Luck Dragon who helps Atreyu on his quest. Offering our hero faster travel and reassuring him he doesn't eat kids, Falkor has a penchant for winking and rather likes his ears scratched. He was voiced by Alan Oppenheimer, who has been in genre entries from *Star Trek: DS9* to the upcoming *Superman/Batman: Public Enemies*.

Alan Oppenheimer also voiced Warpath in the Eighties TV series of *Transformers*.

The gremlins cause mayhem and havoc wherever they go.

Noah Hathaway spent months in England learning how to bareback ride.

The Empress is a noble but tragic figure.

the idea of giving up when sadness overcomes you) to death and destruction of an entire world, it is certainly a mature children's adventure that doesn't shy away from some particularly dark moments.

Maybe it was this emphasis on darkness that inevitably made it flop at the box office, earning back only $20 million of its $27 million budget. Perhaps people didn't understand the film's sombre twists and turns and were seeking more popcorn-friendly fare, however, when it was released on video, the movie became one of the highest selling videos ever released at the time, and is now a firm fan favourite too. It has even, in fact, spawned two sequels, an animated series, a live-action show, a play, a ballet and a videogame in the form of *Auryn Quest*. The most recent news to come out of the franchise, however, is that Leonardo DiCaprio's production company, Appian Way, and The Kennedy/Marshall Co are apparently in discussions with Warner Bros. about remaking *The Neverending Story* with a modern twist.

Its continual growth as a franchise is testament to the love people have for the original – Steven Spielberg even has the medallion-like Auryn from the franchise hung in a glass display case in his office. Bar a rather dated theme song and perhaps some mildly overbearing moral preaching, the original still holds up as a tale of pure imagination today, rife with compelling and creative characterisation, an inventive premise, and fantastic visuals. It could be argued, though, that *The Neverending Story* should be noted in these pages simply for its underlying theme itself, one that heralds our very own genre – that to imagine, fantasise and fill yourself with hopes and dreams is to be alive. Without the imagination needed for films such as this, *The Neverending Story* itself argues, we are left with Nothing.

THE NEVERENDING STORY is available on Blu-ray from Warner Brothers Pictures

THE MOONCHILD

Keeping with the youthful theme, Fantasia's Empress is named 'childlike', and was played by 11-year-old Tami Stronach. As The Nothing consumes her world, it is also killing the Empress too. Soft spoken and wise, the Childlike Empress is excellent in the final moments, as we wish she'd say 'do you believe in fairies' and get it over with.

Tami thought she was auditioning for a play and had no idea it was for a major motion picture.

THE SCIENTIST

Engywook the gnome is the proud scientist that points Atreyu in the right direction. Caring and kind, he stands beside us as we root for the warrior when he passes through the risky Sphinx Gates. He was played by Sydney Bromley, who also had parts in *An American Werewolf In London* and Disney's *Dragonslayer*.

Engywook's wife, Urgl, was played by OBE Patricia Hayes, who also starred in *Willow*.

A NEVERENDING FRANCHISE

The Neverending Story may not have been a box office hit, but it still spawned two sequels. The first, directed by George Miller, arrived in 1990 and despite a drop in the visual effects quality, it still earned $17 million at the box office. Titled *The Neverending Story II: The Next Chapter*, it featured plot elements from Michael Ende's book that were left out of the first film. In a sad footnote, Jonathan Brandis, who played Bastian and who also starred in *seaQuest*, went on to commit suicide at the age of 27.

On a happier note, Fantasia was kept alive by the imagination of director Peter MacDonald in 1994, who gave us a third movie, starring *Free Willy*'s Jason James Richter and one now rather famous Jack Black. Based only upon the characters from Ende's book, the third film had a new story. It only had a limited release and hit the VHS market the same year, which is no surprise, really, what with the absence of Atreyu, turning Falkor into a blithering idiot, and making the Empress rather less childlike and with a shopping addiction. For shame.

Why is The Neverending Story a Modern Classic?

1. Creature feature
Okay, the creatures may look a little dated now when compared to our CGI saturated times, but for the era they were impeccable, and really brought this world alive. There's also a tangible depth of field that only puppetry can create.

2. Fantastic Fantasia
The land of Fantasia itself is vivid and varied, each scene taking us into a new part of the realm as Atreyu rides through deserts and across gloomy swamps. As the Ivory Tower shimmers towards the camera, you see the amount of work that has gone into creating a universe before our eyes.

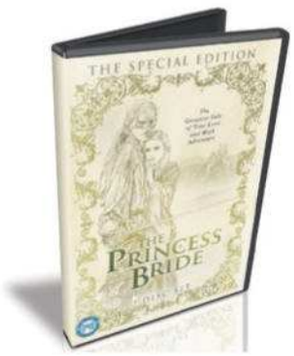
3. "It's always dark in the beginning"
Not afraid to shy away from darker issues, *Neverending Story* takes us down some unexpected paths for a children's movie, be it death, destruction, sadness or giving up. It's a good job, then, that a happy ending is in wait.

4. Quirky critters
The characterisation is one of the movie's most charming qualities, with each creature being varied and individual. The artists even managed to turn a piece of rock into a sympathetic and tragic character. They did indeed look like big, strong hands, Rockbiter, they did indeed.

5. A villain you never see
The antagonist, The Nothing, is, well... not really anything at all. Yet it still manages to be a looming force that we become quite fearful of. Forgetting the latent meaning behind its hopes and dreams-sucking nature, it's actually quite genius that a primary villain could be nothing at all.

THE MOST PERSONALLY CHERISHED NOVEL AND SCREENPLAY OF REVERED AUTHOR WILLIAM GOLDMAN, THE PRINCESS BRIDE WAS FOR YEARS CONSIDERED UNFILMABLE. HOWEVER, WHEN DIRECTOR ROB REINER FINALLY PERSUADED GOLDMAN IT COULD BE DONE, THE DUO WENT ON TO PROVIDE A CINEMATIC FANTASY TREAT THAT'S DELIGHTED GENERATIONS. SCIFINOW BRAVES THE CLIFFS OF DESPAIR, HOPS DEFTLY ACROSS THE FIRE SWAMP AND RESISTS THE DEADLY EFFECTS OF IOCANE POWDER TO REVISIT AND CELEBRATE THE ENDURING APPEAL OF THIS GENRE CLASSIC

THE PRINCESS BRIDE



Film

94 mins // 25 September 1987
Director Rob Reiner
Writer William Goldman
Cast Cary Elwes, Robin Wright, Mandy Patinkin, Chris Sarandon, Christopher Guest, Wallace Shawn, Andre the Giant

About

The film based on William Goldman's fictional 'adaptation' of a book he most certainly didn't have read to him as a child, *The Princess Bride* is a fairy tale of true love, revenge, swordfights, monsters, giants and Rodents of Unusual Size. It's also a pacey, witty spoof, replete with quotable dialogue and knowing banter. Its formidable writer-director team attracting all manner of bankable talent of the time, the film's a veritable who's who of the era's actors, comedians and even wrestlers. In short, *The Princess Bride* is a classic in every sense of the word.

It's one of those films that everyone, inexplicably, seems to have watched as a child. However, falling in with the fondly remembered likes of *Labyrinth*, *The Neverending Story* or *Flight Of The Navigator*, *The Princess Bride* is a movie that demands reappraisal by our older, wiser selves. This isn't because it's particularly deep, or layered, or even because it contains particularly outstanding set pieces or special effects. No – quite simply, *The Princess Bride* is just incredibly good fun. Beautifully written, it's full of hilarious dialogue, performed with comedy timing second to none. It's a box-ticking fairy tale with the addition of a highly knowing, unfailingly witty delivery by a cast more than aware that absolutely nothing is being taken seriously, while still, somehow, successfully creating a rip-roaring tale of swashbuckling adventure.

The comedic exchanges float cheerily over the top of a plot that's all about the moments. As Buttercup (Robin Wright) falls for Westley (Cary Elwes), the farmboy realises he must leave in order to prove himself worthy of his love's affections. It's not long, however, before Buttercup learns that Westley was killed at sea by the feared Dread Pirate Roberts. Emotionally dead inside, but also the most beautiful woman in the world, she attracts the attentions of the snooty Prince Humperdinck who, unbeknownst to her, only wants a wife in order to engineer a war between his kingdom of Florin, and the neighbouring land of Gilder. A ragtag band of professional criminals are hired to kidnap and kill Buttercup, but Vizzini (Wallace Shawn), Inigo Montoya (Mandy Patinkin) and Fezzik (Andre the Giant) are quickly chased down by the mysterious Man in Black.

We're not shocked when the shady figure turns out to be Westley, nor are we surprised when he manages to beat each of the criminals in their own specialist areas and, after killing the villainous Vizzini, recruit his two henchmen to the cause of rescuing Buttercup. We're not even vaguely surprised when the Six Fingered Man who murdered Inigo's father turns out to be Humperdinck's right-hand man, Count Rugen. It's that kind of story – told with absolutely no pretensions of drama, suspense or elaboration.

But somehow, it works. Performances that could so easily come across as smug, cynical or overly knowing have us laughing along as the actors constantly risk breaking character with contemporary patter. It's undoubtedly aided by the addition of comedy greats like Peter Cook, playing a lisping priest conducting a wedding ceremony, or Billy Crystal and Carol Kane, chasing each other round a hovel as the wizard couple Miracle Max and Valerie, forever engaged in the bickering of an elderly couple.

In 1987, Rob Reiner and William Goldman were both, in their own separate ways, heavyweights of the movie industry. Rob Reiner came fresh from acclaim with *This Is Spinal Tap* and, shortly after, *Stand By Me*, while Goldman was already a legend, having produced Academy Award winning screenplays for *Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid* and *All The President's Men*. With such excellent work behind them, it perhaps comes as little surprise that, should they join forces on a project, it would turn to gold. In many ways, however, it was still a minor miracle that the picture was even started in the first place.

Perhaps it was fortunate that the potentially difficult same-titled novel, upon which the film was based, had been penned by professional Hollywood screenwriter Goldman. He had cleanly converted his 1973 novel, which dressed itself up as an abridged version of a classic (but made-up) novel, however, in the years between had found the utmost difficulty in finding a director capable of realising his vision.

"It was [known] as one of the greatest screenplays… you know, things never produced," Reiner told Hitfix.com earlier this year. "It was on a list of things like that. And I knew that at one point François Truffaut was involved. At one point Norman Jewison was involved and Redford was involved. There were all kinds of people involved in trying to make this into a film and I had read one of the scripts, and it was not the book."

Reiner brought his passionate personal vision for the film to the attention of Goldman who, happily, agreed to meet up and let Reiner explain how he actually intended to successfully bring the book to celluloid.

Arriving at Goldman's house, Reiner was naturally apprehensive. Whereas others had tried and failed to win the writer over, Reiner had definite plans in mind. His ideas involved, at a very basic level, contracting the novel's wide and complex plot, with its numerous breaks into incidental detail, and further diversions into Goldman's own apparent struggle in writing it, into a more standard action movie-based plot that would prove palatable to audiences of the time. Neat and timely changes, such as the characters' epic quest through the Zoo of Death's different levels in the novel becoming, simply, Westley's far more

The battle of wits, of course, doesn't end well for poor Vizzini.

It's painfully obvious who The Man In Black is but we just don't care.

STOP SAYING THAT!

Quotable lines that have stood the test of time

"AS YOU WISH"

We are introduced to Buttercup, daughter of farmers, as she lords it over farmboy Westley. No matter the strain caused by her orders, Westley will carry them out, uttering only "As you wish". The Man in Black later cries the immortal line as Buttercup throws him down a hill, unmasking him instantly as her lost love.

T In a quest for realism, Cary Elwes (Westley) urged Christopher Guest (Count Rugen) to hit him on the head for real. Elwes was hospitalised for a day.

"HELLO. MY NAME IS INIGO MONTOYA. YOU KILLED MY FATHER. PREPARE TO DIE"

Inigo has spent a lifetime pursuing 'the Six Fingered Man', who murdered his father. He's nailed the perfect introduction for when he catches up with the killer, which he repeats ad nauseam in his battle with Count Rugen.

T Mandy Patinkin (Inigo) claims his only injury while filming was a bruised rib due to stifling laughter.

"LIFE IS PAIN, HIGHNESS. ANYONE WHO SAYS DIFFERENTLY IS SELLING SOMETHING"

The Man in Black, having rescued Buttercup, is being strangely hostile. Her protestations at the suffering she felt at losing her true love, Westley, seem to make him angrier than ever, causing him to unleash this nugget of wry wisdom.

T Buttercup actress Robin Wright went on to play Jenny in Robert Zemeckis's highly successfully film *Forrest Gump*.

"NEVER GO AGAINST A SICILIAN WHEN DEATH IS ON THE LINE!"

Vizzini, Sicilian and tactical genius, instructs the Man in Black that he's fallen victim to a classic blunder. While "never get involved in a land war in Asia" is the most famous, this one is more important. Laughing, Vizzini is sure he's won the battle of wits, and he's not the one who's swallowed the poison. His laughter is cut short as he drops dead...

T Vizzini's statement on the most famous common blunder is based on principles stated by Field Marshal Montgomery in a House of Lords Speech.

"INCONCEIVABLE!"

Vizzini's personal catchphrase is used both to dissuade his doubters from challenging him, and to utter dismay when his plans (often) unravel before his eyes. He uses it so often, Inigo Montoya observes, "I do not think it means what you think it means."

T The Dread Pirate Roberts really existed, and terrorised the Caribbean in the early 18th Century. He was also known as Black Bart.

It's a classic fairy tale that never takes itself seriously.

Everything always comes down to politics, right?

It looks like it's all over for the hero... but wait!

personal and tense torture experience in the Pit of Despair.

More importantly, though, Reiner had a clever angle on making the film interpretation pacey and audience-pleasing, while still maintaining one of the novel's most centrally unique features – those constant interruptions of the story by the author which, by way of staggeringly irritating plot spoilers ("Buttercup does not get eaten by the eels at this time") produce some of the more humorous elements of the novel.

The solution was, to all intents and purposes, to preserve this layer directly, but change the narrator from the author himself to the grandfather of a young boy, visiting the child's sick bed and reading him the fabled novel by S Gildernstern as a way to cheer him up. It was a neat way to keep all the jokes in, as well as a clever nod to the cross-generational themes of the book, in which Goldman, realising the sudden importance of the story from having his father read it to him, decides he must make it a palatable tale for his own son.

"THE PRINCESS BRIDE IS A BOUNDLESSLY APPEALING, INFINITELY REWATCHABLE FANTASY ADVENTURE, TREADING A FINE LINE OF APPEAL ACROSS AUDIENCE AGES"

Goldman was impressed by Reiner's obvious understanding of his novel, and resulting foresight in how it should be filmed, and agreed quickly to go into production. The winning combination of popular child actor Fred Savage (*The Wonder Years*) and Columbo himself, Peter Falk, kept the lively quippery up, while making the film ever more appealing for a family audience.

At this point, *The Princess Bride* could have become a fair movie, with an interesting narrative gimmick. But it just so happens that the choices of acting talent didn't just stop at Falk and Savage, as the most incredible cast began to be assembled. Seemingly, everybody wanted a piece of *The Princess*

YOU KILLED MY LOVE

Those niggles that we'd happily live without

Does The Princess Bride have any more imperfections? Tell us at www.scifinow.co.uk/forum

THE R.O.U.S

We still love the Rodents of Unusual Size, but if these costumes were at all threatening in 1987, they're bottom-rung effects now. While one of them does a bang-up job of trying to gnaw Westley's arm off, the battle never even reaches the fringes of dramatic.

T Recent videogame *Fallout: New Vegas* features a hidden colony of these creatures living in a secret underground cave. Disturb them at your peril.

MATTE-TASTIC

You could argue that it lends a 'storybook' feel, but those matte painted backdrops just haven't aged well. While rural Yorkshire and other choice locations feature heavily, the time the characters spend out at sea, and on the Cliffs of Insanity, look particularly synthetic to the modern eye.

T Look really carefully when Buttercup and Westley are rolling down the hill; 'Buttercup' suddenly has a beard!

FEZZIK'S RHYMES

The largely silent Fezzik's love of rhyming words in his head was an endearing character trait in the book, but Andre the Giant's mumbled delivery in the movie often baffles the audience, messing up some nicely timed comedy moments. Send a wrestler to do an actor's job...

T As a child, the young André René Roussimoff was regularly driven to school by his neighbour – none other than playwright Samuel Beckett.

Inigo has revenge on the mind and a repetitive introduction constantly on his lips.

Andre the Giant's mumbling performance has sweet appeal.

Bride, and what resulted was as veritable who's who of Eighties comedy talent. Projecting Goldman's snappy lines and dry humour with near-flawless delivery, the actors are clearly having a whale of a time, gleefully entering the roles of these medieval fantasy beings, but playing them like squabbling couples, bantering friends or whining villains of the contemporary age, resulting in a film packed full of memorable characters.

Not a line is wasted throughout the entire running time. Elwes' farmboy turned Douglas Fairbanks-esque swashbuckler Westley is no ordinary leading man, suffering no fool gladly and delivering some rapid-fire put-downs to any who cross him. Andre the Giant, though struggling to learn his dialogue (and in fact only eventually mastering them via taped examples read by Reiner), still plays a memorably soft-hearted and vulnerable Fezzik – often the only portrait younger viewers will now hold of the great wrestler. And Inigo Montoya and Vizzini spawned catchphrases (see 'Stop saying that!' boxout) that are still infectiously abundant today.

The Princess Bride is a boundlessly appealing, infinitely rewatchable fantasy adventure, skilfully treading a fine line of appeal across audience age and sophistication levels that's, sadly, rarely seen nowadays. It's a genre classic through and through, but also a movie that could teach family directors of today more than a few tricks.

THE PRINCESS BRIDE 25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION is available on Blu-ray from 20th Century Fox

FRED SAVAGE

Overexposed and overused, it feels like young Savage had to appear in absolutely anything and everything aimed remotely at children throughout the late Eighties. Child actors generally put across an unfailing smugness and overconfidence, and Fred's no exception. Bleugh.

In his adult life, Savage has turned his hand to all manner of more mature roles, including playing a serial rapist in *Law & Order* in 2002.

MAWWIAGE...

Now don't get us wrong. Peter Cook's roof-raising cameo as the priest marrying Buttercup and Humperdinck is absolutely, unequivocally hilarious. So much so, the film could do with so much more of him. His paltry minute or two on screen are such a wasted opportunity.

Peter Cook is credited, quite correctly in our opinion, in the cast list of the movie as "Impressive Clergyman".

LEGACY OF A LEGEND

The Princess Bride has never received a sequel, but it's come close. Tying in with the book's parody, pretending to be an adaptation of S Morgenstern's 'classic novel' (with author and novel being purely inventions of Goldman's imagination), the 1998 editions and beyond contain an 'adapted' chapter of Morgenstern's follow-up novel *Buttercup's Baby*. The reason, states Goldman in his introduction to the work, is that he's encountering problems gaining permission to do the rest due to legal wranglings with the dead author's estate. Not only this, but it transpires that Stephen King has already been enlisted to adapt the book anyway.

In the story, Fezzik sacrifices himself by jumping off a cliff to catch Westley and Buttercup's baby, Waverly, who has been thrown down by a madman.

In interviews, Goldman has refused to complete a sequel, describing sequels by directors such as Lucas and Spielberg as "hooker movies".

Why is The Princess Bride a Modern Classic?

1. The script
It was uncommon for the time that such a deeply stereotyped fairytale story of fencing, love and monsters revelled so ironically in its own cheesiness, while simultaneously transcending into something even greater. While everyone is clearly playing for laughs, there's a far more wry quality of humour going on than was evident in a lot of Eighties comedies like the *Airplane* series or anything *National Lampoon* put out.

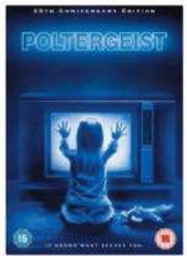
2. The cast
An inspired collection of recognisable greats, up-and-comings and where-did-they-gos, nobody misses a beat throughout. Billy Crystal, Carol Kane, Peter Cook, Mel Smith and Andre the Giant are just some of the famous faces. It just feels like Reiner managed to extract a memorable performance from everyone concerned.

3. The grandfather
Peter Falk holds it all together with his inimitable mastery, stepping in with Fred Savage to provide those essential 'interruptions' into the story. His delivery of classic disappoints like, "Don't worry. She does not get eaten by the eels at this time" will forever raise a chuckle, but more importantly, Reiner's suggestion for trying this dynamic was part of the reason William Goldman agreed to make the film in the first place. Columbo, we salute you.

4. The swordfighting
There are some genuinely well-choreographed battles in *The Princess Bride*, achieved by the cast studying the art for up to eight months each.

IN ADDITION TO FEATURING ONE OF CINEMA'S STRANGEST PAIRINGS, THE MARRIAGE OF WUNDERKIND STEPHEN SPIELBERG TO LOW BUDGET HORROR DIRECTOR TOBE HOOPER, POLTERGEIST ALSO DELIVERED AN INTRIGUING PAIRING OF CINEMATIC GENRES THAT HAS RARELY BEEN MATCHED WITH THE SAME STYLE OR FLAIR SINCE. AS POLTERGEIST APPROACHES ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY, SCIFINOW TAKES A FOND LOOK BACK AT ONE OF THE HORROR SUCCESS STORIES OF THE EIGHTIES…

POLTERGEIST



Film

RUNNING TIME: 114 Mins
RELEASE DATE: 4 June 1982
DIRECTOR: Tobe Hooper
WRITER: Steven Spielberg
CAST: Craig T Nelson, JoBeth Williams, Heather O'Rourke, Beatrice Straight

About

Poltergeist tells the story of the Freelings; a regular suburban family who lead a seemingly idyllic and near perfect life. Things take a turn for the sinister, however, when the youngest member of the family, Carol Anne, hears strange noises from the family TV. Initially, events are intrusive – a stack of impossibly placed chairs here, a child being moved across the floor there – but the spirits soon reveal a hidden malevolence when they capture Carol Anne and transport her to another dimension. As the distraught family bring in paranormal experts, the spirits fight back.

***Poltergeist*, like many other modern classics, is a film that works on a number of different levels.** As much a social satire as it is a film about the bonds and strengths of a family, it remains refreshingly relevant today, even if some of its special effects have long since become quite dated.

As *Poltergeist* begins, we're treated to the final bars of the American national anthem as a television station goes on standby. Despite the obvious patriotism, *Poltergeist* is no mawkish love ballad to all things Americana, but a far darker tale. By the time its credits have rolled, the American dream of main protagonists the Freeling family has not only been well and truly shattered; but, in one of *Poltergeist*'s most stunning and referenced scenes, actually imploded upon itself. *Poltergeist* is a film where nothing is what it seems, effortlessly marrying seemingly unmatchable genres together – in this case, family drama and outright horror – to create a truly memorable and powerful film that still has the power to shock more than 30 years after its original release.

Poltergeist has been dogged by controversy over the years, mainly due to the frankly ridiculous 'curse' that has been attached to it, and the numerous discussions over whether director Tobe Hooper was actually in charge of the project for its duration.

Hooper's involvement on *Poltergeist* began when producer Steven Spielberg asked him if he was interested in directing a science fiction film about invading aliens called *Night Skies*; something Hooper had no interest in. After moving into new offices while working on *The Funhouse*, he came across a book about ghost stories, and shared his interest with Spielberg, who also had a love of the supernatural. Spielberg came up with the story of *Poltergeist*, and co-produced the film with Frank Marshall. He also co-wrote the screenplay with Michael Grais and Mark Victor, who would both go on to write the script for sequel *Poltergeist II: The Other Side*.

Over the years, numerous members of the cast and crew stated that Spielberg's role was far more hands-on than a typical producer. Many of these stories arise from an article written in the *LA Times* while *Poltergeist* was still being filmed. Jerry Goldsmith, *Poltergeist*'s composer, revealed that he worked exclusively with Spielberg, while JoBeth Williams, who played mother Diane Freeling, stated, "It was a collaboration, with Steven having the final say. Tobe had his own input, but I think we knew that Steven had the final say. Steven is a strong-minded person and knew what he wanted. We were lucky, because we got input from two very imaginative people."

The story clearly aggravated Hooper, because as far as he was concerned he had fulfilled his contractual obligations as a director, even though he apparently had no input in the final cut of the movie. "I don't understand why any of these questions have to be raised," he exclaimed during the article. "I always saw this film as a collaborative situation between my producer, my writer and myself. Two of those people were Steven Spielberg, but I directed the film and I did fully half of the storyboards. I'm quite proud of what I did… I can't understand why I'm being slighted. I love the changes that were made from my cut. I worked for a very good producer who is also a great showman. I felt that was a plus, because Steven and I think in terms of the same visual style."

> "POLTERGEIST IS A TRULY MEMORABLE AND POWERFUL FILM THAT STILL HAS THE POWER TO SHOCK 30 YEARS AFTER ITS ORIGINAL RELEASE"

Hooper has since gone on record several times, most notably in an interview with the *AV Club* in 2000, that he was the only person directing *Poltergeist*, but many remain unconvinced, especially actress Zelda Rubinstein, who portrayed Tangina Barrons.

In an interview with *Ain't It Cool News* in 2007, she revealed, "I can tell you that Steven directed all six days I was there. I only worked six days on the film, and Steven was there. Tobe set up the shots and Steven made the adjustments. You're not going to hear that from Tobe Hooper; you'll hear it from Zelda, because that was my honest to God experience. I'm not a fan of Tobe Hooper."

While it's quite possible that the true story of who directed *Poltergeist* will never be

Heather O'Rourke was a real trooper, and gives a tremendous performance as the youngest Freeling.

THE 5 BEST POLTERGEIST FRIGHTS

Key moments that still thrill

THAT LINE…

Carol Anne is awoken by static from the TV screen, and talks to voices only she seems to hear. When the spirits break out of the television set, they trigger an earthquake, which in turn wakes the other Freelings. It's here that Carol Anne turns to her parents and intones, "They're here!"

T HEATHER O'ROURKE, WHO PLAYED CAROL, ANNE, WAS SPOTTED BY STEVEN SPIELBERG. SHE BEAT DREW BARRYMORE TO THE ROLE.

FACE OFF

After watching a steak crawl across a worktop, ghost hunter Marty notices his skin has started to flake away. He starts ripping huge chunks of flesh away from his face, showing off both the impressive make-up and the icky horror that got Tobe Hooper noticed in the first place.

T THE HANDS THAT ARE RIPPING OFF CHUNKS OF MARTIN CASELLA'S FACE ACTUALLY BELONG TO STEVEN SPIELBERG.

THE RESCUE

Armed with tennis balls and some rope, the Freelings attempt to rescue Carol Anne from a cupboard that doubles as a portal to another world. Realising that she can't come to them, Diane enters the alternate dimension. It's a touching scene backed up by ILM's impressive pyrotechnic effects.

T *POLTERGEIST*'S MUSIC IS COMPOSED BY JERRY GOLDSMITH. IT WAS NOMINATED FOR BEST ORIGINAL SCORE.

A WATERY GRAVE

As Diane tries to rescue her young children, she inadvertently falls into the family swimming pool. As she tries to escape, she slides into the water, which is filling up with cadavers. Screaming in terror, she struggles out, only to slide again into the now rapidly filling death trap.

T REAL HUMAN SKELETONS WERE USED DURING THE SWIMMING POOL SCENE, AS THEY WERE CHEAPER THAN PLASTIC MODELS.

CLOWNING AROUND

Startled, Robbie turns to where his sinister-looking clown sits, and discovers it isn't there. He looks under his bed, only to discover it empty. As the camera pans up, the clown appears behind him, wraps his arms around the youngster's neck, and drags him under the bed.

T AFTER SUCCESSFUL PROTESTING, *POLTERGEIST* EVENTUALLY RECEIVED A PG RATING IN THE STATES INSTEAD OF AN R.

They look a little dated now, but the monsters of *Poltergeist* are still exceedingly well designed.

cleared up, there's no denying that there are elements of both directors in the final cut. It's as hard to imagine Hooper coming up with the many touching family scenes that play out during *Poltergeist*'s opening as it is to imagine Spielberg thinking up a portal to another dimension that looks like the opening and walls of a gigantic vagina. It's the juxtaposition of themes and ideas that continue to make *Poltergeist* such an important and relevant movie, one which has been referenced and popularised numerous times over the last three decades.

Poltergeist's opening scenes are pure Spielberg. The Freeling family are introduced as a typical suburban family, enjoying a carefree life in a well-to-do area where husband Steven works as a realtor. Kids play mischievously in the street, and a remote-control rivalry takes place between neighbours, while a touching scene where Steven helps his son Robbie overcome his fear of an approaching storm are recognisable Spielberg trademarks. In many ways, they mimic similar scenes and dynamics from *ET*, which was released less than a week after *Poltergeist*. Interestingly, some elements from both *Poltergeist* and *ET* were first planned for *Night Skies*, which may explain the many similarities between the two films.

"THERE'S A DELIGHTFUL MALICIOUSNESS THAT MASTERFULLY BUILDS AS POLTERGEIST PROGRESSES"

Despite the playfulness of early scenes, there's also a delightful maliciousness that masterfully builds as Poltergeist progresses. This, in part, is mainly due to the dynamic pacing that *Poltergeist* exhibits. Initially, things start off slowly, with a few unsettling disturbances to punctuate the family drama, including a memorable scene of impossibly stacked chairs. Once Carol Anne gets kidnapped, though – in a scene that frightened the five-year old actress Heather O'Rourke so much that Spielberg took her in his arms and promised she'd never have to do anything as scary again – *Poltergeist* becomes relentless, rarely allowing the audience to stop for breath, and delivering some genuinely frightening scares that still hold up well today.

MEET THE FREELINGS

Your guide to Spielberg's most unlucky family

Want to share your opinion on Poltergeist? Follow us on Twitter @SciFiNow

STEVEN (CRAIG T NELSON)

The patriarch of the Freeling family regularly rows with his next door neighbour, and is wary of the events taking place within his home. A hard-working realtor, he loves his wife and children, and discovers that the house was built on a cemetery.

T AMONG OTHER ROLES, NELSON VOICED MR INCREDIBLE IN PIXAR'S *THE INCREDIBLES*, AND APPEARED IN *THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE*.

DIANE (JOBETH WILLIAMS)

At first, Diane is entranced by the events that take place in the house, making her young daughter take part in paranormal projects. As things take a dangerous turn, however, she becomes a courageous lioness who will stop at nothing to protect her family.

T WILLIAMS IS CURRENTLY SERVING AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE SCREEN ACTORS GUILD FOUNDATION.

CAROL ANNE (HEATHER O'ROURKE)

The youngest member of the Freeling family is the most susceptible to the paranormal activity within the house. She's the first to encounter the spirits when they make contact through the TV, and she's eventually captured by them for a large part of the film.

T O'ROURKE WAS THE ONLY ONE FROM THE FIRST FILM TO APPEAR IN BOTH SEQUELS. SHE DIED AGED 12 AFTER A MISDIAGNOSIS.

***Poltergeist* has been dogged by numerous instances of controversy since its release.**

Hooper supplies the ick, but Spielberg supplies the sentimentality in *Poltergeist*.

It all seems to come to a tumultuous end when paranormal experts are bought in to put the spirits to rest and rid the house of evil. For a moment, it appears that the unlikely team of ghostbusters has succeeded, with medium Tangina Barrons even going so far as to smugly declare that the house is now "clean". It's simply the calm before the storm, though, and as Diane Freeling and her two youngest children take a well-deserved rest after Carol Anne's traumatic rescue, *Poltergeist* plays its final card; a card of killer clowns, rotting corpse-filled swimming pools, and *that* vaginal portal.

Thanks to its impressive blending of genres, stunning special effects and uniformly excellent acting from its largely unknown cast, *Poltergeist* became a huge success, eventually managing a worldwide gross of nearly $122 million from a $10.7 million budget. It earned three Oscar nominations for Best Visual Effects, Best Original Score and Best Sound Effects Editing, and spawned two sequels; *Poltergeist II: The Other Side* in 1986, and 1988's disappointing *Poltergeist III*.

Neither film managed to capture the magic of Spielberg and Hooper's collaboration, and few other horror films have managed to blend genres quite as successfully either. We'll never really know just how much of *Poltergeist* was Spielberg alone, but what we do know is that it remains a highlight of the horror genre, and one that's never likely to be improved upon. Unfortunately MGM's plans to remake the 1982 film came to fruition earlier this year, and director Gil Kenan was never able to bottle lightning the way Spielberg and Hooper did. The movie opened to mixed and average reviews.

ROBBIE (OLIVER ROBINS)

The Freeling son is by far the unluckiest member of the family, getting caught in a number of squeamish situations. In addition to getting attacked by his extremely creepy clown, he also suffers the indignity of being nearly swallowed alive by an animated tree.

ALTHOUGH HE RETURNED FOR *POLTERGEIST II: THE OTHER SIDE*, ROBINS QUIT ACTING IN 1986.

DANA (DOMINIQUE DUNNE)

The eldest daughter of the Freelings is constantly wound up by her younger siblings. Not afraid to stand up for herself, she nevertheless proves to be Poltergeist's scream queen, possessing a set of lungs that would put Jamie Lee Curtis to shame.

DUNNE RECEIVED HER BIG BREAK IN ACTING IN THE TV FILM *DIARY OF A TEENAGE HITCHHIKER*.

POP-CULTURE-GEIST

Poltergeist's brilliance has ensured that it's had a huge cultural impact. It has been spoofed and parodied in numerous films and TV shows, including *American Dad*, *The Simpsons* and *South Park*. By far the best, though, is the *Family Guy* episode 'Petergeist'.

It mirrors the film closely, featuring many key scenes. Chris is grabbed by a treant, which doubles as a *Lord Of The Rings* gag; Peter rips off his face in the bathroom to uncover the face of *King Of The Hill*'s Hank, while Stewie sings the Phil Collins hit *In The Air Tonight* when he finds himself trapped in spiritual limbo.

'Petergeist' also recreates the rescue scene from the film, although this time, instead of items coming out of thin air, they appear from Meg's arse. The final scene mimics both *Poltergeist* and *The Flintstones*, with Lois leaving the TV from their motel in the hallway, only for Peter to take it back inside and replace it with Meg.

WHY IS POLTERGEIST A MODERN CLASSIC?

IT'S CONTROVERSIAL

Popular films are often surrounded by controversy, and *Poltergeist* is no different. From the use of real human skeletons to the debate surrounding its actual director and the infamous 'curse', *Poltergeist* has been dogged by misinformation, fanciful speculation and downright lies.

IT'S INFLUENTIAL

Like many classic films, *Poltergeist* has wormed its way into popular culture. Scenes like the rescue of Carol Anne, her famous catchphrase and the infamous pool scene have appeared in everything from *American Dad* to *The X-Files*.

IT MAKES YOU THINK

While *Poltergeist* is a haunted house story at heart, many look at it as a sideways swipe at America. While this holds some relevance (a book about Regan features prominently early on) just as many feel it depicts the fall of the American dream.

IT'S SENTIMENTAL

The story itself is rather unlikely, but *Poltergeist* nevertheless makes you consider the lengths parents will go to protect their loved ones. You might not face the same circumstances, but *Poltergeist* does pose the question of just how far would you be prepared to go to save a loved one.

IT'S TIMELESS

Though the effects don't always hold up, *Poltergeist* is timeless. It's a testament to Spielberg that it still has the ability to thrill three decades after its release.

TERRY GILLIAM'S FANTASY ADVENTURE TIME BANDITS IS ONE OF OUR MOST BELOVED CHILDREN'S FILMS OF ALL TIME, BUT IT'S NOT JUST AN ENTERTAINING NOSTALGIA-FEST; IT'S A CHALLENGING AND RICH PIECE OF CINEMA. JOIN US AS WE JUMP THROUGH THE NEAREST TIME HOLE TO REMEMBER…

TIME BANDITS

Film

RUNNING TIME: 116 mins
RELEASE DATE: 6 November 1981
DIRECTOR: Terry Gilliam
WRITERS: Terry Gilliam, Michael Palin
CAST: Craig Warnock, Sean Connery, David Rappaport, Kenny Baker, David Warner, Ralph Richardson

About

Bright young Kevin (Craig Warnock) buries himself in history books while his dullard parents endlessly watch game shows. When a group of time-travelling dwarves burst into his room, he joins them on their adventures. These bandits have stolen a map from the Supreme Being, and plan to exploit the holes in the fabric of the universe. They steal from Napoleon and Agamemnon, meet Robin Hood and escape the Titanic, but don't realise they are being manipulated by the embodiment of evil, who wants their map for his own nefarious purposes: to rule the universe.

Of all of Terry Gilliam's films, *Time Bandits* is arguably the most fondly remembered. *Brazil* may be his masterpiece, and *12 Monkeys* and *The Fisher King* showed he could mould his sensibility to the mainstream if he wanted to, but *Time Bandits* has that rare combination of heart, adventure and bite. The scenes that thrilled and scared us as children are still powerful today. It presents a child's escapist fantasy, but it made the journey dangerous as well as wonderful.

The film begins by depicting Kevin (Craig Warnock)'s suffocatingly dull suburban home life, where his parents compare their hedge trimmers and microwaves with the neighbours' and watch the same game show every night (hosted by a wonderfully oily Jim Broadbent). His parents relentlessly pursue and discuss the latest technology while Kevin buries his head in books and dreams of adventures in Ancient Greece, which will stand him in very good stead for what is to come.

While Gilliam has been critical about the state of the film industry in the past, his best films have a big beating heart, and that heart was never better used than in *Time Bandits*. The script, co-written with his fellow Monty Python member Michael Palin, reportedly came out of his frustrated attempts to get *Brazil* financed and his decision to write something for all the family. But there are layers to Kevin's journey through time that give the fantasy adventure surprising resonance.

Of course, it's tremendously fun and packed with great performances: John Cleese channels the Duke of Kent as Robin Hood; Sean Connery provides a brief father figure as the kindly Agamemnon; Ian Holm is a tempermental Napoleon; Ralph Richardson gives the Supreme Being a benign dustiness and David Warner tears into his role of Evil with every inch of his long fingernails. Palin himself plays one half of a pair of star-crossed lovers opposite Shelley Duvall.

There's a suggestion that the Bandits themselves, intentionally or not, represented the Pythons. Randall, the irritable and headstrong one, is John Cleese; Fidgit, the adorable and kindly one, is Palin; Og, the quiet one, is Graham Chapman; Strutter, the sharp-tongued one, is Eric Idle; Vermin, the grubby one who's always eating, is Gilliam, and Wally, the bolshy loud-mouth, is Terry Jones. But to view the group as simple avatars is not only a bit of a stretch, it's also does the actors (David Rappaport, Kenny Baker, Mike Edmonds, Malcolm Dixon, Tiny Ross and Jack Purvis) a great disservice.

Gilliam reported that Rappaport, who played the group's leader Randall, chose to distance himself from the other actors playing the Bandits, and was convinced that his acting ability set him apart from them. Rappaport's own personal issues notwithstanding (the actor suffered from depression and committed suicide in 1990), the ensemble is excellent, including young Warnock as Kevin. By making the boy the sensible, responsible figure, the Bandits themselves are free to be more impulsive, emotional and entertaining.

"DAVID WARNER IS NOT THE KIND OF ACTOR TO LET HIS PERFORMANCE BE DOMINATED BY A MAD COSTUME"

However, the group is never really presented as a genuine alternative to Kevin's family.

That alternative comes in the form of Connery's King Agamemnon. Palin and Gilliam's script infamously described the character in the script as "Sean Connery, or an actor of equal but cheaper stature." The scene in which the Bandits 'rescue' Kevin from his palace is one of the most bittersweet sequences in the film, as Kevin has found someone who wants to look after him. He's even willing to accept Robin Hood's offer to stay and join his gang of thieves before the Bandits pull him away, but Agamemnon's offer to adopt Kevin is essentially his dream come true. He would be living history with a parent who cared about him.

But once Kevin is snatched away from Agamemnon, there aren't any more father figures for Kevin to reach for. Instead, he realises that his intelligence, quick-wittedness and general goodness make him a better person than nearly every other character in the film. He has to look after the Bandits, and it's he who has to stand up to Evil. In Gilliam's fairy tale world, that means he's ready to be without a family, which is why, despite their son's warnings, his parents touch the Ultimate Evil and explode. The reappearance of Connery as the winking fireman implies that this is supposed to be a happy ending, but it's an undeniable shock. What is Kevin supposed to do now?

CLASSIC QUOTES

"HEROES? HEROES? WHAT DO THEY KNOW ABOUT A DAY'S WORK?"
RANDALL

"IF I WERE CREATING THE WORLD I WOULDN'T MESS ABOUT WITH BUTTERFLIES AND DAFFODILS. I WOULD HAVE STARTED WITH LASERS! EIGHT O'CLOCK, DAY ONE!" **EVIL**

"DEAD? NO EXCUSE FOR LAYING OFF WORK"
SUPREME BEING

"OH BENSON, DEAR BENSON. YOU ARE SO MERCIFULLY FREE FROM THE RAVAGES OF INTELLIGENCE"
EVIL

"MUM! DAD! IT'S EVIL! DON'T TOUCH IT!"
KEVIN

"THEY'LL THINK I'VE LOST CONTROL AGAIN AND PUT IT ALL DOWN TO EVOLUTION" **SUPREME BEING**

"FIVE FOOT ONE AND CONQUEROR OF ITALY. NOT BAD, HUH?"
NAPOLEON

"HOW WAS I TO KNOW WE WERE GONNA RUN RIGHT INTO AN ICEBERG? IT DIDN'T SAY 'GET OFF BEFORE THE ICEBERG' ON THE TICKET!" **RANDALL**

Perhaps more than any of his other films, *Time Bandits* highlights Gilliam's capacity to indulge in escapist fun.

Kevin will have to make his own way, just like the rest of us. The universe is imperfect, as Randall explains while describing how the time holes work. "You see, to be quite frank, Kevin, the fabric of the universe is far from perfect. It was a bit of botched job, you see. We only had seven days to make it." Gilliam uses the seven-day aspect from Christian beliefs, but it's not necessarily a Christian film. God is referred to as the Supreme Being because, as Fidgit says, "We don't know him that well. We only work for him."

On the other side of the spectrum isn't Satan, but rather the Evil Genius, or simply Evil. David Warner is clad in a red cloak and a head piece that strongly resembles the facehugger from Alien, but Warner is not the kind of actor to allow his performance to be dominated by a mad costume. While the Bandits' greed is purely monetary, Evil lusts for knowledge and power (it's interesting to note how his quest for to master the technological age and his urgent need for information prefigures Neil Gaiman's novel, *American Gods*). When one of his minions asks what he hopes to gain understanding of, Evil replies, "Digital watches. And soon I shall have understanding of video cassette recorders and car telephones. And when I have understanding of them, I shall have understanding of computers. And when I have understanding of computers, I shall be the Supreme Being!"

"THERE ARE LAYERS TO KEVIN'S JOURNEY THROUGH TIME THAT GIVE THE FANTASY ADVENTURE A SURPRISING RESONANCE"

Evil doesn't understand how a Supreme Being could exist who has no interest in mastering the new age. "God isn't interested in technology. He cares nothing for the microchip or the silicon revolution. Look how he spends his time: 43 species of parrots! Nipples for men! Slugs! He created slugs! They can't hear. They can't speak. They can't operate machinery. Are we not in the hands of a lunatic?" Evil's love of technology is clearly paralleled by that of Kevin's parents, and ultimately they all end up being blown to smithereens. Read into that what you will.

When God himself does arrive, he's something of a distant headmaster. He directs the Bandits to clean up and tells

TIME TO GET AWAY

What are Gilliam's heroes escaping from?

BUREAUCRACY (BRAZIL)

1 Jonathan Pryce's dreams of escaping his dystopian existence are ultimately made possible by a lobotomy, courtesy of his 'best friend' Michael Palin.

DEATH (THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN)

2 The Baron (John Neville) knows that a good story will live forever, prompting him to spin a fabulous tale of his own existence.

GRIEF (THE FISHER KING)

3 Robin Williams flees the pain of witnessing his wife's murder by questing for the Holy Grail, accompanied by Jeff Bridges' guilty shock jock.

The Bandits' travels allow for much skewing of historical figures, including Ian Holm's Napoleon.

Writer and fellow Python Michael Palin cameos as the lover of *The Shining*'s Shelley Duvall.

them that he was using them all along. When Kevin asks him why evil has to exist, he replies rather absent-mindedly "Something to do with free will, I think." This creator is benign, but not quite kindly, and the suggestion of fallibility is fairly serious stuff for a children's film. But then, Gilliam has never been one for talking down to his audience. He even briefly kills off Fidgit for dramatic effect because he's the cute one.

However, all this talk of spirituality and growing up distracts from one of *Time Bandits*' biggest charms: it's a huge amount of fun. Holm and Cleese are hilarious, as are the little interludes with Shelley Duvall and Michael Palin as the lovers who not only have to overcome his… problem ("I must have fruit!"). There's Mr and Mrs Ogre and their attempts to deal with his back problems, the Bandits performing *Me And My Shadow* for Napoleon and the "plenty of ice" Titanic gag. Finally, there's the forces of good who arrive to save the day, including arrogant cowboys and Wally in some kind of spacecraft. Admittedly they all die, but there's a reason why *Time Bandits* is Gilliam's most profitable film; it has this substance and adventure.

While it is a lot of fun, there's an undeniable thread of melancholy. It's not mindless escapism; it's a very pointed escape from a dreary everyday life. There's a stability and security that Kevin leaves behind, and the ending of the film doesn't shy away from that. He can't go with the Bandits or even Sean Connery. The film leaves him with a ruined house and two dead parents. If you want to escape, it doesn't get more conclusive than that.

TIME BANDITS is available on Blu-ray from Avco Embassy Pictures

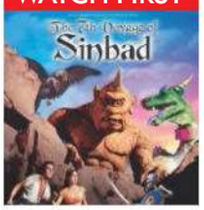
DEAD JUNKIE FATHER
(TIDELAND)

4 Young Jodelle Ferland proceeds to embalm Jeff Bridges, befriends oddballs and wrecks trains. But the squirrels made it all less lonely.

A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL
(THE IMAGINARIUM OF DOCTOR PARNASSUS)

5 Christopher Plummer makes the foolish mistake of gambling with Tom Waits' Old Nick for his daughter (Lily Cole)'s soul. Inevitably, things don't go to plan.

WATCH FIRST



THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD (1958)

The late, great Ray Harryhausen was a huge influence on Gilliam, and this great Dynamated adventure is a clear precursor to *Time Bandits*.

WATCH NEXT

THE NAVIGATOR: A MEDIEVAL ODYSSEY (1988)

A young boy leads 14th Century Cumbrians to tunnel out of the Black Death and into 20th Century New Zealand.

YOUR TAKE ON THE CLASSIC
WHAT YOU THOUGHT @SCIFINOW

"Evil man wanting to oppress society with technology assisted by drooling simpletons. Entirely relevant today." **@6_tailed_comet**

"Watched it with my children recently, they loved it." **@trillian22**

'It's a film that has exposed itself to be rich in ways I didn't grasp as a child who loved the film madly." **@redbeardsteve**

"I remember seeing it in the theater when it was first released and enjoyed it immensely. Still one of my favorites." **@PLBthetoonist**

"If *Time Bandits* was made today the PC brigade would have a hissy fit. Doubt they get away with some of the jokes and scenes now." **@safcinexile**

"I think it's the weakest out of that trilogy but that may be because I have an unnatural love for *Munchausen*." **@Benlashep**

"Personally preferred *Ladyhawke* – mastered THE sword fight and 'Australia' dialogue!" **@JasperBagg**

"The dwarves doing *Me And My Shadow* is amazing!" **@Waddywidwow**

THE LOST BOYS DUSTED OFF THE VAMPIRE FROM HIS CRYPT AND TURNED HIM INTO A PIN-UP FOR THE MTV GENERATION. HERE'S THE STORY OF HOW IT STRUGGLED TO COME TO LIFE, AND THEN BECAME DOWNRIGHT UNKILLABLE…

THE LOST BOYS

Film

RUNNING TIME: 93 minutes
RELEASE DATE: 1987
DIRECTOR: Joel Schumacher
WRITERS: Janice Fischer, James Jeremias, Jeffrey Boam
CAST: Kiefer Sutherland, Jason Patric, Corey Haim, Corey Feldman, Dianne Wiest

About

Michael (Jason Patric) and Sam (Corey Haim) move with their recently divorced mother (Dianne Wiest) to Santa Carla, a coastal town overrun with gang activity and disappearances. Michael falls for a local girl Star (Jami Gertz), inadvertently becoming the enemy of David (Kiefer Sutherland), the leader of a bloodsucking biker gang. Meanwhile, Sam meets Edgar and Alan Frog (Corey Feldman and Jamison Newlander), two comic shop clerks with a hatred of vampires, who arm him with books so he can swot up on bloodsuckers, which comes in handy when Michael starts acting highly unusual…

Joel Schumacher's *The Lost Boys* is largely hailed as something the Eighties did right. Mullets aside, the story about two boys and their recently divorced mother moving to a vampire-infested town has become immortalised as a cult classic. "I sensed that with this picture I could have fun without becoming 'camp'," Schumacher said on the DVD special features documentary. "Most importantly, I thought there would be a chance to do something original that enjoyed a time-honoured tradition." Part of that timeless quality has to come down to the story itself, inspired by the plot of *Peter Pan*. The boy who never grew up was leader of the Lost Boys, hence the film's title, and there were clear parallels to the forever-young Peter stealing Wendy, Michael and John away on adventures, albeit dramatically different in tone.

Writer James Jeremiah came up with the premise and penned a pre-pubescent romp in the style of *The Goonies*. *The Lost Boys* became baby-faced bloodsuckers, and vampire dusters the Frog Brothers were originally outlined as chubby, eight-year old Cub Scouts. In an early draft of the script, the leader of the fanged motorcycle gang, David (Kiefer Sutherland) was named Peter, and the new family in town were christened Wendy (Dianne Wiest), Michael (Jason Patric) and John (Corey Haim), with pet pooch Nanook in tow, inspired by Nana. However, when executive producer Richard Donner moved on to helm *Lethal Weapon* he hired Joel Schumacher, who had some changes in mind. Some names were altered, but the biggest deviation from the original screenplay was that the cast were grown up to teenagers, enabling the film to redefine the seductive nature of vampires and update their appeal.

"*The Lost Boys* had an unknown cast," Schumacher told the BBC of the difficulties he faced. "When I was shooting it, the studio kept saying, 'Joel, are you making a horror film or a comedy, because the two won't go together!' Most of my films were dark horses, and I like to take risks. I feel very comfortable with it." It's true that the two genres weren't usual bed buddies, but this mixed-bag flick proved that audiences were perfectly willing to be yanked out of a tense moment with an unexpected quip, usually delivered by the pint-sized slayers Edgar and Alan Frog. Branded with an R-rating upon its release, there were scenes such as the barbecued surfer buffet that left a few stomachs turned. It even played with vampires' eating habits; instead of jumping for the jugular, David viscerally chomps into one victim's cranium. The demonic appearance was the work of special effects make-up maestro Greg Cannom, who would go on to work on *Blade*, *Watchmen*, *Pirates Of The Caribbean* and, more recently, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*. He was raised on horror movies, and monsters were his passion. "Joel was very specific about what he wanted," Cannom recalled on the DVD. "He wanted a sleek, aerodynamic look to them, but he was also using all these actors who were very young and model-looking, so he didn't want to make them look like monsters."

> "THE STUDIO SAID 'ARE YOU MAKING A HORROR OR COMEDY – THE TWO WON'T GO TOGETHER'" JOEL SCHUMACHER

He designed the heavy, furrowed forehead and angular cheekbones that *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* would be heavily influenced by in the following decade. It was a clever solution to the problem of making them look different in vampire form without concealing the actors' looks. "I had a picture of a tennis player that I had for years, and it was faded, giving him this weird bone structure… I always thought 'One day I'm going to use that,'" he continued, "so I pulled that out, and it's kind of similar to what I did in *The Lost Boys*, though I stylised it a lot more." The fiery contact lenses were the main focal point of his creature's face but, as he explained, they were in their infancy and weren't commonly used because they were so uncomfortable to wear. In their Eighties incarnation, contact lenses were made of impermeable glass that stopped any oxygen reaching the eyeball, so in reality, David and the undead gang could only 'vamp out' for five minutes of filming at a time.

The Lost Boys **played on themes of teenage alienation and peer pressure.**

LOST BOYS BEST BITS

Counting down the five most memorable moments

MICHAEL COMES OUT

The effects of drinking blood are taking hold on Michael. Suddenly, his brother looks like a good meal, but Nanook, the family pet, senses something isn't right. He protects Sam, prompting him to realise, "My own brother, a goddamn, shit-sucking vampire! You wait till Mom finds out, buddy!"

T THE MOVIE CAME UP WITH THE PHRASE 'VAMP OUT', WHICH FOUND ITS WAY INTO *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER*.

DINNER WITH MAX AND THE FROGS

Lucy invites Max to dinner, and a dubious Sam brings the Frog brothers for back-up. They've decided he could be the head vampire, and to confirm their suspicions they put him through a series of tests, including garlic, holy water and mirrors, much to Lucy's embarrassment and our amusement.

T MAX DOESN'T ENTER THE HOUSE UNTIL MICHAEL INVITES HIM IN, WHICH FOLLOWS THE VAMPIRE MYTH IN MOST HORROR FILMS.

CALLING IN THE EXPERTS

Sam calls in the big guns – the Frog brothers – when he sees the transparent reflection. They tell him to "get a good sharp stake and drive it through his heart," but Sam is reluctant to kill his own brother. Meanwhile, Michael wakes up on the ceiling of his bedroom as his newfound ability to fly kicks in.

T THE NAMES OF THE FROG BROTHERS, EDGAR AND ALAN, ARE A NOD TO LEGENDARY HORROR FICTION WRITER EDGAR ALLAN POE.

DEATH BY STEREO

There are some great scenes, but Dwayne's death even had a band named in his honour. Sam fires an arrow into his heart, pinning him to a stereo and making more sparks than a Mötley Crüe concert. The line "Death by stereo" is a quip that *Buffy* would take inspiration from.

T THE SCENE WHERE THE VAMPIRES ARE RIDING THE MERRY-GO-ROUND FORESHADOWS THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY COP IT.

"ALL THE DAMN VAMPIRES"

Ultimately, it's grandpa that saves the day, charging down the house with his truck and impaling the head vamp. His last line sums up the movie's balance of horror and comedy perfectly, "One thing about living in Santa Carla I never could stomach: all the damn vampires."

T AN EARLIER DRAFT OF THE SCREENPLAY DIDN'T END ON A JOKE, BUT WAS GOING TO CUT TO THE SURVIVING LOST BOYS REGROUPING

Ironically for a movie about immortal life, it signalled the beginning of the end of most of the cast members' careers. Kiefer Sutherland is one of the few with an active IMDb page, and after a sabbatical from the supernatural he returned to our screens in *Touch*, but it was *The Lost Boys* that he'll always be remembered for. "People come up to me and say 'I like what you're doing now, but *The Lost Boys* was my favourite," he says on the Special Edition DVD. "It really had an impact back then. The phenomenal thing about *The Lost Boys* is how it grew over time where you started to see it in art house cinemas at a midnight showing, and then it was top five in Warner's video history… It went from generation to generation, and I think it's phenomenal that a film can be handed down like that."

Prior to landing the role, Sutherland appeared alongside future Frog Brother Corey Feldman in *Stand By Me*, but it was a small role in the Sean Penn-starrer *At Close Range* that caught Joel Schumacher's attention. "He had seen a close-up at the end of the film of me watching Sean Penn go into a court room," Sutherland recalls on Special Edition DVD. "I had black hair at the time – it was a film where I don't resemble what I look like at all – but Joel called me in." Schumacher said he considered Sutherland a "born character actor," even at 18-years old, because despite having the least amount of dialogue in the movie, "his presence is extraordinary." Sutherland thinks it was the lines themselves, however, adding, "My character tended to have the really cool lines at the end of a scene, so I'm deeply grateful to Joel for those."

Also joining the cast was Corey Haim, who played younger brother Sam with wide-eyed innocence and the ability to hit some killer high notes. His heated reaction to discovering his brother is a vampire – "You wait till Mom finds out, Buddy!" – exhibits perfect comic timing. Little details like the fact he can't abide his Grandpa's taxidermy collection, but is geared to go into battle with the real, walking dead serves as a statement for how straight-faced this production plays out, despite poking fun at its roots. The

"THE LOST BOYS WAS MY FAVOURITE. IT REALLY HAD AN IMPACT BACK THEN"

KIEFER SUTHERLAND

BUFFY THE LOST BOY SLAYER

Five ways Buffy was inspired by The Lost Boys

THE EVIL STEPFATHER

While Sam and Michael are faced with the prospect of a vampire as a stepfather, Buffy had to contend with a robot. The tagline also drew on the parallels of teens and vampirism, 'Sleep all day. Party all night. Never grow old…'

THE BUSINESSMAN TURNS OUT TO BE THE BIG BAD – MAX IN *THE LOST BOYS* AND THE MAYOR IN *BUFFY*.

VAMP FACE

The face is strikingly similar, with prosthetics enhancing the forehead and cheekbones. It's clearly demonic, but doesn't disguise the actor, which is necessary when you have pin-ups like Kiefer Sutherland and David Boreanaz.

THIS VAMP FACE WAS CREATED SO AS NOT TO HIDE THE ATTRACTIVE CAST'S FACES TOO MUCH IN *THE LOST BOYS*.

BLEACHED BLONDE VAMP

Speaking of pin-ups, David was a motorbike-riding, blonde mullet-sporting Billy Idol lookalike that captured the rebellious spirit of the vampire. Spike from Buffy took note, donning a leather jacket, hitting the bottle and becoming one of the best loved characters.

THE VAMPIRE FANGS IN *THE LOST BOYS* ARE ON THE INCISORS RATHER THAN THE CANINES. *TRUE BLOOD* MIMICS THIS.

Kiefer Sutherland's badboy vampire David provided inspiration for the likes of Spike in *Buffy*.

The Lost Boys has stood the test of time as a cult classic.

final battle at the end is fought not on a graveyard, but in the family home loaded with booby traps: a bathtub of holy water, necklaces of garlic and loaded water pistols at the ready and the special effects team manages to make the deaths look believable. The famous 'death by stereo' sequence actually took two weeks to design and stage, yet only lasts a matter of seconds; a testament to the behind-the-scenes sweat and blood that was poured into the movie.

The ultimate showdown between half-vampire Michael and the fully fledged David was cleverly resolved, giving closure to cinemagoers as well as leaving the coffin door open for a sequel. When his body plunged into a pair of antlers, he didn't explode like his teammates, instead closing his eyes as the theme song *Cry Little Sister* kicked in. However, it took more than 20 years to reanimate this lost franchise, and even then it didn't involve Schumacher. "I told them to do *Lost Girls*, and not do a *Lost Boys* sequel," he told RottenTomatoes.com. "There is no *Lost Boys* sequel. All the boys are dead. The Coreys are too old. So what would be the movie? You'd have to make up a whole new set of characters. I said 'Do gorgeous teenage biker chicks who are vampires. It'll be great.' But they don't listen to me." Corey Feldman, for one, did not believe he was too old to be a Frog Bro, and returned for a straight-to-DVD sequel and threequel after that. For the fans – and Kiefer Sutherland – nothing came close to the original. "*Lost Boys* was a massive part of my life, it still is," he told *Shock Til You Drop*. "You can't crap on that."

THE LOST BOYS TRILOGY is available on Blu-ray from Warner Bros. Pictures

REVENGE OF THE SEQUELS

Over two decades after the release of the original *Lost Boys*, Warner Bros green-lit a straight-to-DVD sequel. *Lost Boys: The Tribe* started life as a script about surfing werewolves, but studios rejected it for being too similar to *The Lost Boys*. However, as director PJ Pesce has since revealed, marketing departments see the guaranteed sales in turning a movie into a sequel off the back of a classic. That is exactly what happened to *The Tribe*, which was changed into a story about a vampire surfing gang (despite the generally accepted rule that bloodsuckers cannot cross water). Corey Feldman returned as Edgar, one half of the vampire-slaying duo, while Corey Haim and Jamison Newlander made appearances as vampires. Despite fans of the original largely slating this sub-par follow-up, it sold on the title alone, and Warner ordered a third instalment, *Lost Boys: The Thirst*. By now the story is barely there, serving to prop up naff jokes about *Twilight*, reality shows and Feldman's career.

WHY IS THE LOST BOYS A RETRO CLASSIC?

BITING ONE-LINERS

Here's a few of our favourites:
"You don't like rice? Tell me Michael, how could a billion Chinese people be wrong?" – David
"Are you freebasing, Michael? Inquiring minds want to know." – Sam Emerson

CRACKING SOUNDTRACK

The Lost Boys have good taste in music; in their lair there's a poster of The Doors' Jim Morrison, who recorded the original version of *People Are Strange*, which plays in the film, and the theme song *Cry Little Sister*, recorded by Gerard McMann, is widely regarded as one of the best parts of the film.

HORROR/COMEDY – A NEW GENRE!

The Lost Boys contained the right amount of camp hilarity and gore; in one scene there's a bonfire of bodies, and in the next a bandana-sporting, pint-sized Slayer.

IT GAVE US BUFFY

There's more than one similarity to Joss Whedon's much-loved vampy teen drama. Whether it's the bleached Billy Idol-alike David/Spike, the California setting or the metaphors for growing up, the influence is undeniable.

STAR COULD KICK BELLA'S ASS

The love interest, Star, is a strong female heroine. She's not moody, whiney or a damsel in distress; Star only wants Michael's help so that she can help Laddie, a small half vamp/half boy.

POWER TO THE GEEK

The Frog brothers were unashamedly geeky. They worked in a comic store and used a vampire comic as a survival manual. In *Buffy*, we have bookworm Willow, awkward Xander and the Evil Geek Trio. It's all about the outsiders becoming heroes.

THE SECOND TIME SAM VISITS, THERE'S TWO GUYS PLAYING PINBALL. THE ONE WITH FACIAL HAIR IS JOE, THE OWNER.

POP CULTURE PHENOMENON

The Lost Boys had lines like "shit-sucking vampire", and referenced pop culture with "The bloodsucking Brady Bunch". Buffy would do the same, but would be more influential. The dialogue made vampires relevant again, connecting with the young audience.

THE LOST BOYS WAS FILMED IN SANTA CRUZ, WHICH MEANS 'HOLY CROSS' IN SPANISH, A CONVENTIONAL WEAPON AGAINST VAMPIRES.

IN THE EIGHTIES, TIM BURTON WAS YET TO BECOME A FRANCHISE AND JOHNNY DEPP WAS FENDING OFF FREDDY IN HIS NIGHTMARES. MICHAEL KEATON WAS THE MUSE DU JOUR AND HELPED BRING TO LIFE THE DIRECTOR'S ALL-TIME FAVOURITE CHARACTER, BEETLEJUICE. NOW, OVER 25 YEARS ON, THERE'S TALK OF THAT THE STRIPEY FELON MIGHT HAUNT CINEMAS AGAIN. HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED THE FIRST TIME ROUND…

BEETLEJUICE

Film

RUNNING TIME: 92 minutes
RELEASE DATE: 1988
DIRECTOR: Tim Burton
WRITERS: Michael McDowell, Larry Wilson, Warren Skaaren
CAST: Michael Keaton, Alec Baldwin, Geena Davis, Winona Ryder

About

When a loved-up young couple bite the big one, an eccentric family move into their New England home. They try to kick them out by mastering the art of haunting, but when their plans backfire they resort to hiring obnoxious bio-exorcist Betelgeuse. The striped zombie scares the human inhabitants (almost) to death until the ghostly pair team up with the living to try and send the spectre back to his grave. It features a young Winona Ryder as the kooky daughter, Catherine O'Hara in overbearing matriarch mode and Michael Keaton, who clearly revels as the croaky and grotesque Betelgeuse.

Tim Burton's *Beetlejuice* – or 'Scared Sheetless' as it was almost known – defined its director and all his future deeds in less than 100 minutes. With only *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure* and a bunch of shorts to his name, the big-haired cinemagoers of '88 were totally unprepared for this seemingly one-off piece of screwball cinema. The overt obsession with the macabre, its twisted take on German Expressionism and a clear empathy for the outsider would become the blueprint for Burton's films to follow. Without *Beetlejuice*, he wouldn't have met the cast and crew that he would call upon again and again to perform in his gothic theatre: Winona Ryder's solemn teen transformed into a blonde beauty in *Edward Scissorhands*; Catherine O'Hara's abominable artiste took on the soft tones of Sally in *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and Michael Keaton returned the following year wearing a Bat cape and scowl. Perhaps the most integral component of his films, though, was Danny Elfman, who has scored every one of Burton's major motion pictures since.

The main character (whose name was spelled phonetically for the film title) is given the acclaim of being Burton's favourite creation, and Keaton is the only one allowed to play him. It's his willingness to return to the bio-exorcist gig ("Free demon possession with every exorcism!") that has given the go-ahead for Seth Grahame-Smith (*Dark Shadows*, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*) to write a script for a sequel. It doesn't matter that the film is approaching its 30th anniversary, since Keaton was so caked in make-up, moss and hairspray that time won't tell. To create the distinctive look of the character, Keaton requested the wardrobe department send over a rack of clothes from different eras so that he could piece his perverted apparition together. "I wanted him to be pure electricity, that's why the hair just sticks out," he told the *LA Times*. "At my house I started creating a walk and a voice. I got some teeth. I wanted to be scary in the look and then use the voice to add a dash of goofiness that, in a way, would make it even scarier. I wanted something kind of mouldy to it, too. Tim had the striped-suit idea and we added the big eyes. I think that movie will go forever because it's 100 per cent original."

> "THIS MOVIE WILL GO FOREVER BECAUSE IT'S 100 PER CENT ORIGINAL" MICHAEL KEATON

The tale of newlydeads, the Maitlands (played by Alec Baldwin and Geena Davis) put a fresh spin on the afterlife. The New Englanders were happily picking up decorating supplies when a dog darted into the road, sending their car swerving off a bridge. Apparently, an early draft of the script depicted this death in a graphic way that had Barbara's arm crushed and the pair screaming for help until water flooded their mouths. The rewrite of Michael McDowell's script, however, cut straight from a long shot of the lake to the couple walking through the front door as if nothing had happened. They slowly deduce that they're goners and, faced with a 'Handbook For The Recently Deceased', discover that you can't escape bureaucracy – even in death. This is where the script draws most of its black laughs from, introducing them to a parallel world of queues, unhelpful civil servants (they're the ones who committed suicide, apparently) and a chain-smoking case worker with smoke smouldering from the slit in her throat. "When Adam and Barbara die, things only change marginally for them," said Burton. "After death, they simply have to deal with more extreme versions of what they would encounter in real

Keaton would return to collaborate with Burton on his two Batman films.

5 BEST BITS

The most memorable moments from this life and the next

DAY-O

The Deetz family have guests, but the Maitlands aren't in the mood for a dinner party. When Delia tries to divert the topic away from ghosts, she gets possessed by the spirit of Harry Belafonte and kicks off a stirring rendition of *Day-O*. The other diners find themselves jerking and wiggling to the beat as if being pulled by invisible strings.

THIS TRACK WAS ORIGINALLY GOING TO BE ONE FROM THE INK SPOTS, BUT O'HARA SUGGESTED A CALYPSO TUNE INSTEAD.

HURRICANE DELIA

Delia sweeps through the house with her sidekick Otho and a couple of cans of spray paint in one of the film's funniest domestic scenes. O'Hara nails the over-zealous stepmother role; especially the diva tantrum she throws when her hubby threatens to halt her outrageous interior design plans.

O'HARA ALSO VOICED THE CHARACTER OF SALLY IN THE BURTON-PRODUCED *THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS*.

"HONK HONK"

Any scene with Betelgeuse is a standout, but here we discover how truly horrible he is. He claims to have lived through the Black Death and watched *The Exorcist* over 150 times and can't help but make us laugh at his attempts to get Adam on side ("We both shop at the same store, hermano!") while groping his wife.

THE FACE BETELGEUSE PULLS TO PROVE TO THE MAITLANDS HE IS FRIGHTENING WAS GOING TO BE FILMED, BUT WAS SCRAPPED.

SNAKES ALIVE!

Hats off to the ssstop-motion that makes this Betelgeuse-rattlesnake hybrid come to life to terrify the Deetz family. This is what he means by "turning on the juice and seeing what shakes loose," transforming himself into a monster that looks like he's straight out of Tim Burton's sketch book.

THE TITLE CHARACTER SHARES HIS NAME WITH ONE OF THE LARGEST AND BRIGHTEST STARS KNOWN TO MAN, BETELGEUSE.

LIGHT-HEADED

By the end of the movie, Betelgeuse is stuck in the waiting room with ticket number 9,998,383,750,000, which he switches with the ticket of a witch doctor. Soon, the 'ghost with the most' is a tiny talking head on helium. It's a surreal and funny moment to cap off a classic.

HARRY THE HAUNTED HUNTER BAGGED HIS OWN ACTION FIGURE, COMPLETE WITH DETACHABLE 'BEFORE' AND 'AFTER' HEADS.

Geena Davis and Alec Baldwin are suitably endearing as the deceased Maitlands.

life. The movie's view is that when you die, your problems aren't taken care of." The problem for the Maitlands is the fey New Yorkers that have moved into their home and traded the modest fittings for garish art deco, handmade sculptors and the formidable spray can-wielding force of Delia Deetz (Catherine O'Hara).

The film divvies up its time between the newly decorated house and its ghoulish inhabitants with the brief visits to the beyond. Production designer Bo Welch had a ball imagining what it might be like. "For the afterlife, we wanted something vague and evasive enough to defy categorising and invite disorientation, yet specific enough to invoke the fear that the afterlife might not be much different to real life," he said. "The result is a bureaucratic nightmare with a blizzard of paperwork where nothing really happens. The most mundane aspects of human existence follow us into the afterlife." Indeed, a former Miss Argentina bemoans that she wouldn't have had her "little accident" if she had known she would be stuck working as a receptionist. Workers swing through the office via ropes around their necks, and the more deceased employees have to cope with the newbies, such as the exasperated Juno (Sylvia Sidney) dealing with a bunch of American footballers who insist on calling her coach.

"WHEN YOU DIE, YOUR PROBLEMS AREN'T TAKEN CARE OF" TIM BURTON

Whenever the film starts to sag after too much time spent with the living and the practically living Maitlands, who don't seem to have altered much in death, Betelgeuse interjects with an abrupt crotch grab or a crude comment. He's a scuzzy sex-offending spirit, and we love him for it. Most of the special effects displays come from his use of scare tactics, whether he's forcing Medusa-like snakes to shoot out of his face or spinning his head like Linda Blair from *The Exorcist* on fast-forward. In another more elaborate setup he appears with bat-wing ears and wearing a carousel as a hat (look closely and you'll see Jack Skellington's face on top), and his arms turn into giant, inflatable mallets.

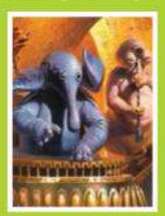
Visual effects co-ordinator Alan Munro said, "Tim Burton wanted the film effects to be as different as possible from the special effects of previous films. We felt we needed another approach for the more sophisticated post-*Star Wars* generation of moviegoers." The picture was reportedly made on a measly budget of $13 million, with just $1 million spent on the visual effects work, but surprisingly they still hold up today. This is probably owed to

4 WEIRDEST SINGING MOVIE MOMENTS

We say thank you for the music, but not for these odd scenes

Want to share your thoughts? Follow us on Twitter @SciFiNow

RETURN OF THE JEDI



On the intergalactic pop scene, the Max Rebo band occupy the charts on a weekly basis. Space girls go mad for Rebo, Droopy McCool and Sy Snootles, but they failed to break the Earth market with their appearance on the *Return Of The Jedi* Special Edition.

T LUKE AND HAN'S MEETING IN JABBA'S PALACE MARKS THEIR FIRST SCENE TOGETHER SINCE THEIR GOODBYES IN *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK*.

GREMLINS: THE NEW BATCH

Brain Gremlin kicks off the party with a smooth rendition of Sinatra's *New York*. It's a surefire hit, especially with the lady Gremlin joining in. When they get blasted with water and electrocuted, Brain still tries to finish the song. That's a true performer.

T THE END OF THE WORLD SCENE WAS INCLUDED ONCE IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT NETWORKS DO HAVE A VIDEO PREPARED.

MARS ATTACKS!

Burton and the rest of the world appreciates Tom Jones; so much so that he included *It's Not Unusual* in both *Edward Scissorhands* and *Mars Attacks!* In the latter, aliens intrude on his gig. By the end of the movie, Jones is the one doing the dancing.

T *MARS ATTACKS!* WOULD PROVE TO BE *BEETLEJUICE* ACTRESS SYLVIA SIDNEY'S LAST EVER MOVIE.

Thanks to the special effects department, *Beetlejuice* looks authentically B-movie.

Like Burton's best films, *Beetlejuice* seamlessly combines comedy with the macabre.

the fact that the team employed some of Hollywood's oldest and most successful parlour tricks. "Some of the techniques we've used in the film have been used in motion pictures since the earliest days of moviemaking," Munro added. "For instance, there are a couple of scenes we shot using old-style mirror effects rather than the more readily accepted and standard blue screen."

It was a loving tip of the hat to the B-movies Burton gorged himself on when he was a child. At the time of *Beetlejuice*'s making, the director was only 30-years old, and it exposes his inexperience at times when the pacing gets a little frantic and the gags teeter on pubescent. But when a scream is raised, it's only for the lack of closet space than any real horror. It's for this reason that anyone can enjoy *Beetlejuice*, as proven by its box office gross of more than $73 million in North America, a huge profit on its minute budget. Unsurprisingly, talk of a sequel started to swarm, and an animated television series titled *Beetlejuice* was commissioned for ABC. It ran for four seasons, with Burton serving as Executive Producer and Danny Elfman composing the opening and closing themes. The titular character was made child-friendly and forced to befriend Lydia, the teen he almost forced into marriage in the movie, who visits him in the Neitherworld in her spare time.

It was a breakout hit that became one of the first shows in US TV history that aired concurrently on two different networks when FOX snapped it up. On the film front, Burton hired Jonathan Gems (*Mars Attacks!*) to pen a sequel, shockingly titled 'Beetlejuice Goes Hawaiian'. According to Gems, the idea of the beach-bound dead guy tickled Burton, and the plan was to have the Deetz family move to Hawaii and unknowingly build on an ancient Kahuna. Batman saved the day, however, by kidnapping Burton and his directing duties for *Batman Returns*, the follow-up to the big break he was granted on the back of *Beetlejuice*'s success. The 'ghost with the most' didn't succeed in exorcising the Deetz family, but he breathed life to Burton's career – and all with only 17 minutes of screen time.

LABYRINTH

Some strange, even surreal moments are expected from *Labyrinth*. However, nothing can get you ready for the Magic Dance song. Here, Bowie prances around in his too-tight trousers and starts tossing the world's bravest baby into the air.

THE OWL IN THE TITLE AND CLOSING SEQUENCE IS THE FIRST ATTEMPT AT A REALISTIC CGI ANIMAL IN A FEATURE FILM.

BEETLEJUICE is available on Blu Ray from Warner Bros. Studios

THE AFTER-LIFE OF BETELGEUSE

Keaton wasn't Burton's first choice for his beloved Betelgeuse. He originally wanted Sammy Davis Jr, but the film company put forward Keaton and the potential was clear. The pair then worked together on *Batman* the following year (1989).

It was a project that was greenlit on the back of *Beetlejuice*'s success, and the result impacted on the superhero genre like a blow to the head. It was the first high-powered comic adaptation to garner big box office attention since *Superman*, smashing the camp image and ushering in a new era of big budget comic-to-screen adaptations.

It tampered with the origin story, framing the Joker for the murder of Bruce Wayne's folks and encouraging others to do the same. *Spider-Man* flung out his organic web-shooters, and superheroes were popping in and out of other characters' panels in the run up to Joss Whedon's *Avengers Assemble*. Thanks to Burton, Batman remained in the public conscious; constantly evolving until it reached his best most grounded incarnation yet.

WHY IS BEETLEJUICE A RETRO CLASSIC?

THE ONLY PG MOVIE TO SAY THE F-WORD

In the USA, the film was slapped with a PG rating despite the sex-crazed Betelgeuse crashing into a cardboard tree and shouting "Nice fucking model!" His vocabulary is filled with words that would have earned a 'tsk' from your mother, and his gestures are even worse.

TIM BURTON'S FAVOURITE CHARACTER

Of all the eccentric oddballs that Burton created, Betelgeuse was his favourite. It was Keaton's, too, which explains his laudable performance.

VERY SPECIAL EFFECTS

The film relied on FX to make the hauntings as B-movie as possible, and it was a good move on Burton's part, as the effects have aged better than half of the bodies in the afterlife's waiting room.

CATCHY TUNES

One minute we're bobbing along to "Day-o! Day-ay-ay-o!" and the next we're watching Betelgeuse drag Lydia down the aisle. It ends on one of the happiest notes in Harry Belafonte's backlog when Winona Ryder mimes *Jump In The Line*.

IT'LL MAKE YOU LAUGH

'Betelgeuse, the name in laughter from the hereafter' wasn't just a clever rhyme. He really is funny, and the rest of the characters are, too. There are some great visual gags, and some that are just so silly you can't help but smile, like the vehicle-flattened victim admitting he feels a little flat.

"Four years ago in this quiet forest, in this cosy cabin, something happened... something so frightening... we prayed it would never happen again" – Evil Dead II trailer

THE EVIL DEAD

The complete guide

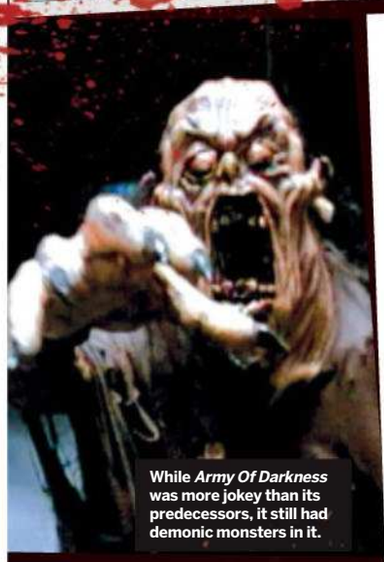
Years before Sam Raimi brought a spandex-wearing webslinger to the silver screen, he terrified audiences with a trip to the woods…

A remote cabin in the woods. Five friends plagued by horrific demons. Intense horror, black comedy and dismemberment, not to mention buckets of blood and gore. A film that would kick-start the careers of three men: writer and director Sam Raimi, star and co-producer Bruce Campbell and producer Robert Tapert. The film? A low-budget horror called *Within The Woods*. Inspired by an assignment Raimi was set while studying at MSU, he wrote a script based on a fictional version of the *Book Of The Dead*. Together with Campbell and Tapert, he formed Renaissance Pictures and planned a feature-length production based on the script.

But there was one little problem: no one could fund it. The script was scaled back to just seven pages, consisting mostly of horror, and was filmed on a budget of around $2,000 in the cold winter of 1978. Raimi was just 19 years old at the time and he considered this project his "rite of passage" into adulthood. With his gore-filled excursion into low-budget horror in the can, the three then bought matching suits and briefcases and visited homes of possible investors in Detroit, Michigan to show them the potential feature. Doctors, dentists, lawyers – it didn't really matter. They visited everyone financially capable. Finally, Raimi found himself sitting on a budget of $375,000… and that's when the real horror began.

"The most ferociously original horror film of the year!" exclaimed Stephen King on *Evil Dead*'s posters. It's an accolade that holds more gravitas than a good deal may think, given that *The Evil Dead* appeared at a time when audiences were bored with horror. People just didn't want to see that kind of film any more, believing it was out of ideas, despite the kick it received from *Halloween* and *Friday The* ➢

The demonic Henrietta, mere seconds after one of the scariest moments in *Evil Dead II*.



While *Army Of Darkness* was more jokey than its predecessors, it still had demonic monsters in it.

13th. The Evil Dead changed that and what's most amazing is that Sam Raimi was just 22 years old at the time.

A story marginally different to *Within The Woods*, it saw five friends travel to a secluded cabin for a fun weekend. But as they arrive, an ominous presence establishes itself, permeating the grounds. That night they find an old-fashioned tape recorder left by the previous owners and decide to listen to it. A man's voice begins to describe the *Necronomicon Ex Mortis – The Book Of The Dead*. As he recites passages, something evil is unleashed… turning their vacation into a horrific game of who can survive until morning without becoming possessed by evil and then trying to dismember everyone in the cabin. Or be dismembered. And through the terror, a young Bruce Campbell emerges as Ash, the unlikely hero.

Given their tiny budget and inexperience with feature-length production, not to mention the length of the shoot, filming *The Evil Dead* was difficult. Producer Rob Tapert remembers: "This movie we shot over many different little shoots; running out of money, having to go back, not getting all the right pieces we needed." In certain cases the cast even had to become part of the crew. "It was tough for Bruce," states director Sam Raimi, "because he had to do his own make-up and keep track of it. A lot of it was shot out of order. He was covered by so many different colours of bile based on who he was slaughtering and at what time."

With something resembling an actual film budget, it enabled Raimi the use of real actors. "We held casting sessions in Detroit and nobody really trusted us," says Tapert, "they thought we were making either snuff films or a porno so would show up with their boyfriends to look over them at the casting to make sure we were somewhat legitimate." While *The Evil Dead* falls far from pornography, one sequence still terrifies almost 30 years since it was filmed. Cheryl, Ash's sister played by Ellen Sandweiss, hears noises outside her window and steps out to investigate. The woods come to life and suddenly attack her, restraining her. Ripping her clothes away, she's yanked down to the floor and sexually assaulted.

"I was thinking, how can we hurt the audience," states Tapert, the man responsible for the idea, "and the entire audience jumps at that moment. My wife saw this movie and thought whoever made it were the sickest people alive… and little did she know she would end up married to one of them." He continues: "This was a scene shot in many little pieces over so many months between the original shoot and pickups. It never seemed that horrific a sequence, and large portions were filmed in reverse so we never really realised the full impact it was actually going to have on people."

But one person it did have an affect on, surprisingly, was Raimi. Asked in an interview for *Evil Dead II* if he regretted the rape, the director replied: "I do… I think it was unnecessarily gratuitous and a little too brutal, and because people were offended by it. My goal is not to offend. It's to entertain, thrill, scare, make them laugh, but not to offend. I think my judgement was a little wrong that time." Even without the rape scene, audiences had blood and gore to contend with. Amusingly, in an effort to fight the MPAA rating's board, Raimi and effects guru Tom Sullivan used multiple colours for blood, going so far as having possessed actors spit milk. "We thought by having them spew different coloured liquids rather than blood we wouldn't have much censorship trouble," states Tapert. But how wrong they were.

Intense horror, brutal violence and scenes like Cheryl's rape forced the UK censors to deem it a Video Nasty in the early Eighties, banning it along with more deserving titles like *I Spit On Your Grave*,

"Legend has it, that it was written by the dark ones: Necronomicon Ex Mortis. Roughly translated... The Book Of The Dead" – Tape Recorder, Evil Dead II

Driller Killer and *Cannibal Holocaust*. The notoriety of the ban, not to mention box office and video receipts pre-Video Nasty made *The Evil Dead* even more popular. And thankfully, the ban wouldn't last, as a test case in Leeds was carried out to acquit 12 films from the list. Raimi flew to the UK while shooting *Crimewave*, his doomed follow-up movie, to appeal *The Evil Dead*. But the judge was lenient, passing the film fit for release. A defence lawyer at the time stated: "The director is here – he can say a few words." The judge replied: "We don't need to hear from the director." Raimi got back on a plane and headed home.

Riding that wave of turmoil, the film became even more successful – in no small part thanks to us. According to Sam Raimi: "The UK audience embraced it and they made it a big hit, along with very good marketing by Palace Video. And after that, the United States said, 'What's that little horror picture doing so well over there?'" Indeed the film, released in the UK in 1983 on just 192 screens, had an 18 certificate and yet still pulled in an audience of more than 2 million people.

On opening night in the US, Sam Raimi, Rob Tapert and Bob Shaye, head of New Line Cinema who distributed the film, visited theatres to gauge reactions. As Bob was watching one scene in particular, the pre-rape, he saw audience members yelling up at the screen, damning Cheryl for her actions. Not sure how to react – as this was before New Line hit big with *A Nightmare On Elm Street* – he turned to Sam and stated: "I think we're going to have to cut this picture up to correct some of these problems." But as they crossed the street to another theatre, the show had sold out from 8 o'clock until midnight and audiences were raving about it. Bob turned to Sam and Rob again: "Well, maybe we can find a way to leave it alone." It must have helped that *The Evil Dead* was so successful that the investors in Detroit received three times their original investment.

Says Raimi: "A number of investors came up to me after the movie and were a little bit angry. 'You told me you were going to make a horror picture and this is a comedy!' Well, it's a horror picture with elements of comedy. But when the cheques started coming in, when it turned out we had made something that could actually sell, they loosened up and realised we hadn't let them down." And nor would Raimi let *Evil Dead* fans down when he returned five years later for an even wilder, even more terrifying sequel.

It was little surprise that Hollywood came knocking on Sam Raimi's door after the success of his first film. Unfortunately, his ⇨

10 of the best scares

Known for its horror as much as gore and comedy, what are some of the Evil Dead trilogy's best scares?

Vine rape – The Evil Dead

1 This scene has become so infamous that even Sam Raimi himself regretted putting it in the movie. Hearing a voice in the woods, Ash's sister, Cheryl, is drawn to investigate. The woods come to life and beat her, stripping her clothing away and yanking her to the floor. That's when the real assault happens.

Fruit cellar – Evil Dead II

2 There are more terrifying moments in *Evil Dead II* than this, but when it comes to setup, editing, pace and reveal, Ash coming face-to-face with Henrietta in the fruit cellar is one of the trilogy's best scenes. The direction and final reveal are proof that Raimi is a master of horror.

Guessing game – The Evil Dead

3 In a game of guess the card, Cheryl guesses every one while staring out the window. The group look at her in disbelief... and that's when she spins around, revealing herself to be a Deadite.

The cellar – The Evil Dead

4 Ash takes two trips into the cellar in *Evil Dead*, but it's arguably the first one that proves scarier. After weird goings on, Scott goes into the cellar to see why the door flew open. With no response, Ash goes down in search of him. And a great scare awaits.

Cellar revisited – Evil Dead II

5 Knowing that the Henrietta Deadite is in the cellar, it falls on Ash to venture down to retrieve pages from the *Necronomicon* that Jake threw there. Similar to the scene towards the end of the first film, where Ash again goes into the cellar, the pacing – as well as Henrietta waiting – making this a terrifying moment.

Arrival at the house – The Evil Dead

6 Arriving at the cabin, Scott walks towards the door – a bench banging against the side. Taking the key from above the door, the bench suddenly becomes absolutely still. As does the audience.

Old hag – Army Of Darkness

7 Having survived The Pit, Ash is treated like a king. However, his relaxation is cut short when an old hag Deadite crashes his party, doing a number on several guards before Ash's boomstick unloads a number on her. It's the closest thing in the film to *Evil Dead*.

Evil Bruce – Evil Dead II

9 Having let the audience get used to Ash, establishing him as the unlikely hero, *Evil Dead II* yanks him away towards the end for an extended scare. Having become possessed, Deadite Ash stalks Annie, the only female survivor left.

Holding hand – Evil Dead II

8 More of a gag than a scare, this stands out because it follows one of the darker scenes – when the spirit of the cabin's owner breaks free of hell. "Jake," says Bobbie Joe, "you're holding my hand too tight." "Baby, I ain't holding your hand," comes the reply. A brief chill ensues.

The Pit – Army Of Darkness

10 As funny as it is scary, this is one of the more violent scenes in the pretty much blood-free *Army Of Darkness*. Having arrived in 1300 AD, Ash is lead to slaughter – to a large pit that houses Deadites. One unlucky chap is thrown in ahead of him and a fountain of blood follows.

Sequel or remake?

Even to die-hard Evil Dead fans there's been confusion for many years as to whether Evil Dead II is in fact a sequel or a remake of its predecessor...

According to Raimi, it's a sequel. Unable to obtain the rights to use footage from the first *Evil Dead*, he and co-writer Scott Spiegel had to shoot new scenes to fill an extended flashback, which is why there are so many similarities between the films. Below is a scene-to-scene comparison illustrating where the confusion stems from, the differences between the scenes and why some fans remain convinced that *Evil Dead II* is in fact a sequel...

EVIL DEAD | EVIL DEAD II

1

Arrival
1 Both films open with Ash in an Oldsmobile making his way to the cabin. While *Evil Dead* has him with friends and his sister Cheryl, in the sequel it's just Ash and his girlfriend Linda. Able to afford a proper cast for this sequel, Raimi re-cast Linda – which only went and made things confusing.

1

2

Amulet
2 In both films Ash is alone with Linda when he presents her with an admittedly tacky little piece of jewellery that she, surprisingly, thinks is beautiful. There's clear difference in the fact that in *Evil Dead* Ash and Linda are sat on a sofa, but in the sequel they're standing. Nonetheless, it's the same scene.

2

3

Recorder
3 While Ash finds the recorded translations of the *Book Of The Dead* with Scott and the rest of his friends in *Evil Dead*, he stumbles on it alone in the sequel's version of past events. Even so, in both films he sits and listens intently. Just before something horrific happens to a loved one.

3

4

Jump
4 Having been taken by the evil in the woods and turned into a Deadite, a demonic Linda confronts Ash outside. In both cases Linda attacks him, knocking him hard to the ground. She then leaps up into the air to pounce, but Ash quickly grabs a nearby shovel and decapitates her mid-air.

4

5

Slammed
5 The biggest clue as to where *Evil Dead II* stands is this scene: having survived the night, Ash steps out of the cabin to leave but is slammed into by the evil stalking the woods. Many presume the flashbacks essentially end after this, but that isn't true. Several further reshot scenes also occur.

5

6

Bridge
6 In *Evil Dead* it's Ash's sister, Cheryl, who finds the bridge in total disrepair after stepping out of his car. But it's Ash who finds the bridge screwed in the sequel – and in daytime no less. A scene revisited from the first film, it was changed so drastically it's never stood out as a flashback.

6

7

Change
7 In both films there's a brief moment where the Deadite Linda reverts back to her human self and tries to trick Ash, pleading with him for help. The biggest difference between the films is that in *Evil Dead II*, Linda's ploy works less well... given that she's just a severed head in a large vice.

7

8

Tool shed
8 Like the aforementioned scene, Ash takes his girlfriend to the cabin's adjacent tool shed. In *Evil Dead* he straps her body to the worktable and grabs a large chainsaw. In the sequel, he clamps her head to a vice. In the former, he can't bring himself to hurt her but in the latter... the claret really flows.

8

To escape censors, every colour of blood was used.

first feature post-*Evil Dead* turned out to be far from satisfactory. That movie was *Crimewave*. "I wanted it to be the ultimate picture of entertainment," says Raimi, "to thrill, chill, make the audience laugh, cry, scream... they screamed for their money back." Running over budget and far over schedule, the studio stepped in and cut numerous pages to recoup cost and ensure a finished film was turned in. "They replaced my actors, they threw Bruce Campbell out of the lead, they threw out my musician Joe LoDuca, they re-cut the picture, they had their own say with the sound effects and mix, they did everything they could to make it what it is today."

Understandably burned out by the whole process, Raimi flirted with many ideas for his next feature before settling on the most obvious. "After *Crimewave* he wanted just to make a movie that worked," says Tapert, "and we knew that *Evil Dead II* would work. It had a certain audience and it could make money for somebody. And that we could make a good picture out of it... which are really the right reasons to make a movie."

The idea for *Evil Dead II* was taken to several studios, all of which turned it down. It wasn't until the boys met Dino De Laurentiis and revealed the box office receipts for *The Evil Dead* in Rome that he gave them a budget of $2 million dollars. Titled *Evil Dead II: Dead By Dawn*, the film was co-written by Raimi's good friend Scott Spiegel – who he lived with at the time along with Joel and Ethan Coen. Its script was written mostly during filming of *Crimewave*, and the plan was to make a sequel that upped the humour to match the violence and scares of the original. Says

By *Army Of Darkness*, Ash had become a true icon of horror – largely due to Campbell himself.

"I fear that the only way to stop those possessed by the spirits of the book is through the act of... bodily dismemberment"
– Tape Recorder, The Evil Dead

Spiegel: "There's only so many things you can do in horror without just repeating yourself, And we just thought we might make it as wild and maniacal as we could. So we went overboard, over the top with everything."

Evil Dead II capitalised on the boys' love of *Three Stooges*-style slapstick humour. It also resolved to scare the crap out of audiences. Picking up seconds after the first film ended, it sees sole survivor Ash having not been killed at the end of the first film, and still being plagued by evil forces in the woods. Raimi has joked about the original's ending, stating: "Rob and myself and Bruce thought that was all there was: this horrible creature came at Bruce and the movie ended. Bruce was saved by positive box-office response."

Like *The Evil Dead* before it, an increased budget brought a higher calibre not just to the actors, but the crew. Because of both, Raimi was able to concentrate on other aspects of the film – such as ramping up his visual style to eclipse the work he accomplished before. "There are two schools of thought for horror filmmakers," he says, "One is that the audience can always create something more horrible than you can show them. And the other school of thought is show them everything. And I believe that both is true; I believe the audience can come up with something more horrible in their minds than I can show them – provided they're given the raw materials to construct something. And I also believe that I've got some pretty horrible things to show myself, so I try and mix and match. I try and scare them and weird them out with visuals, and I try and leave room for them to add their own ingredients."

Unlike its predecessor, *Evil Dead II* was shot on a set constructed right in the middle of a large high school gymnasium, under intense heat. The buckets of fake blood mixed with the heat meant actors sometimes wore flies as well as the general make-up. Speaking of which, *Evil Dead II* marked the first movie that the industry-renowned Greg Nicotero, Robert Kurtzman and Howard Berger worked on before forming KNB EFX. The film also marked something of an excuse for the director to return to his Super 8 days, going so far as lifting and re-filming a whole scene almost verbatim from *Within The Woods* – as Deadite Ash stalked the only female survivor in the film by that point.

While *Within The Woods* opened the door for Raimi the director and Bruce Campbell the star, it's *Evil Dead II* that stands as their best collaboration to date. It's reached a level of cult status its predecessor couldn't, blending bizarrely funny humour, tons of gore, Raimi's consistently increasing visual flare and those damned scares into something that hit far more than it missed – usually when it's trying to scare the life out of you. "I was watching this movie in New Orleans at a test screening," states Campbell, "and two guys got up and ran out of the theatre, and not because they were afraid but because they were laughing so hard. They had to pat themselves on the back as they were out of breath. Then they stayed at the exit door the whole time."

That kind of intended reaction is well worth celebrating, but the one person you expect to be most proud of *Evil Dead II* has a surprising opinion on it. Asked on the set of Scott Spiegel's *Intruder* how he felt about *Evil Dead II*, Raimi, who acted in the underrated slasher, responded: "I think it's okay. It was a fine picture to make when I was 26. And now that I'm 28 I want to make a picture that's about ten times as good." Raimi would never get his wish… although he did come close five year's later with *Army Of Darkness*.

Easily the most divisive film in the franchise, what's most surprising about *Army Of Darkness* isn't that it's set back in the middle ages – especially given that it was the original pitch for *Evil Dead II* – but its name. Universal Pictures didn't want to call the movie *Evil Dead III* – even in light of its predecessors' success. "Yeah, that never made any sense," states Raimi. "They were good people but it never made any sense *not* to call it *Evil Dead III: Army Of Darkness*." Irvin Shapiro, sales advisor on the previous films, came up with *Army Of Darkness* as a title. He was also the man who suggested Raimi rename the first film *The Evil Dead*, rather than the originally intended *Book Of The Dead*.

With a new title suggested, Raimi further separated it from the previous ▷

The musical

As if the franchise couldn't get more wild, Evil Dead takes to the stage

Despite being based on *The Evil Dead*, with all the characters from that film being featured, it actually takes elements from all three films and intertwines them. Approved by Sam Raimi and Bruce Campbell, *Evil Dead: The Musical* opened officially 1 November, 2006, running eight times per week. The last show ran on 17 February, 2007, before production was shifted to Toronto for a 1 May, 2007 start. The run proved so popular the show was extended from June to August, and then to early September.

One of the most appealing things about the production to any fan of the films is its splatter element. It lives up to and, in certain cases exceeds *Evil Dead* and its sequel in terms of gore quotient. In most theatres the first three rows were guaranteed to get sprayed by the ensuing bloody carnage. These rows were amusingly referred to as the 'splatter zone', and patrons were all advised to dress down in case of staining. In Toronto some patrons would all wear white T-shirts so they could take the bloody and drenched souvenirs with them. The show's marketing was inspired by this, selling various "I Survived the Splatter Zone" souvenirs.

The A to Z of Evil Dead

A comprehensive list of everything well worth knowing about in the Evil Dead series...

A is for Army Of Darkness
The concept for the third film was originally planned for the second, with a lot of the promotional material calling it *Evil Dead 1300 AD*.

B is for Bruce Campbell
A friend of Sam Raimi and Rob Tapert, he's appeared in Raimi's films almost as many times as the director's Oldsmobile.

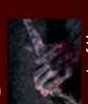
C is for Chainsaw
As much a character of the films as the actors. Ash first used it in *The Evil Dead* and it's literally become part of him since.

D is for Deadite
The evil, demonic beings at the heart of the *Evil Dead* franchise, unleashed from the *Book Of The Dead* when the pages were read aloud.

E is for Evil Dead IV
It would have been easier for Raimi to say he isn't working on it, but the man has repeatedly expressed his desire to go back and make it.

F is for Fake Shemp
Inspired by *The Three Stooges*, Fake Shemps are body stand-ins used when a particular actor is unavailable for shots. Raimi, Tapert and Campbell have all been Fake Shemps.

G is for Gruelling Terror
While the latter films focused more on the comedy aspect, horror has remained a huge part of the franchise – the first film being particularly terrifying.



H is for The Hills Have Eyes
A torn poster for Wes Craven's seminal horror movie would kick-start several occasions where Craven and Raimi would reference each other's work in-film.

More evil

As well as films, Evil Dead has poured over into comics and videogames...

Videogames

It's taken THQ three games over the course of five years to perfect the *Evil Dead* as videogame formula. Its first attempt, *Evil Dead: Hail To The King*, was a terrifying experience in terms of quality, but a fairly boring and uninteresting *Resident Evil* clone. At the time it boasted the vocal talents of Bruce 'Ash' Campbell, and the game did find a good way of keeping the majority of the action forest-based.

Unlike its follow-up, the brilliantly-titled but woefully average *A Fistful Of Boomstick*. The biggest problem was THQ handing development over to VIS Interactive, otherwise known for the exceptionally trite *State Of Emergency*. A riot game that tried to be controversial for the sake of it, *A Fistful Of Boomstick* was pretty much the same game, verbatim – substituting real people for poor Deadites. Again, Campbell lent his vocal talents to Ash, but even he was unable to save this turgid mess from a bad reception.

The most recent game to date in the *Evil Dead* franchise also proved its best. *Evil Dead: Regeneration* was released on PC, PS2 and Xbox in 2005, THQ this time handing development to Cranky Pants Games. A 'what if' scenario that pretends *Army Of Darkness* didn't happen, it boasted a fitting story for the franchise and gameplay similar to Midway's *The Suffering* franchise. THQ hasn't announced plans for a new *Evil Dead* game yet, but *Regeneration* will certainly take some beating.

Comics

Army Of Darkness: Ashes 2 Ashes is set just seconds after the movie, going from Universal's reshot ending rather than the real one. In it, Ash realises he's come back too soon, before his other self goes to the cabin with Linda, and that he's brought Deadites back with him. Together with the wise man from the movie, the two must oversee Ash's trip back to the cabin, to ensure that everything goes as planned – ie, Linda is killed and Ash goes back in time – just so they can amend the problems old Ash caused there.

The comic was followed by *Shop Till You Drop Dead*, which boasted a story more in line with the first two films. In it, Ash realises the *Necronomicon* has founds its way into the hands of his boss at S-Mart. Together with his co-workers, Ash has to survive an onslaught of Deadites through the shopping aisles. This two volumes are the only film-related comics, as it was after this that Ash found his way into the Marvel Universe – as part of its popular, but relatively awful *Marvel Zombies* universe.

A new *Evil Dead* comic was released recently, *Freddy Vs. Jason Vs. Ash*, a DC Comics and Dynamite Entertainment collaboration inspired by the cancelled movie project. Then, early next year, *My Name Is Bruce* and *Galactica* writer Mark Verheiden is releasing a four-issue adaptation of the first film for Dark Horse that expands the characters and certain events of the first film.

entries by calling it, in the movie itself, *Bruce Campbell Vs. Army Of Darkness*. "Because that's all it really is," says the director. "That's what we figured all the audience wants to see. Rather than Bruce Campbell in Army Of Darkness, he's fighting them." Where *The Medieval Dead* was in keeping with its predecessors title-wise, the new relatively superfluous title set in stone the film's wilder, more comedic slant. If *Evil Dead II* was Raimi's tribute to *The Three Stooges*, *Army Of Darkness* was almost a *Loony Tunes* cartoon at times. Never wanting to repeat himself, that was always the plan. Universal wanted a film that could stand alone from the others and Raimi felt he had exhausted the idea of a cabin in the woods horror movie.

Where *The Evil Dead* and its sequel were claustrophobic, interior horror films, *Army Of Darkness* took the action outside. The film sees Ash, having been swallowed by a time hole at the end of *Evil Dead II*, living up to the prophecy foretold in the *Book Of The Dead*. He emerges first as a slave, then as a hero – leading a charge against an onslaught of Ray Harryhausen-like skeletons, not to mention an evil Deadite version of himself. Given that *Army Of Darkness* was Bruce Campbell's first and only leading role in a relatively big production, Sam and his brother and co-writer Ivan Raimi injected him with more goofy one-liners and quips than every Moore *Bond* film put together. To accentuate how silly the film was – which also substituted Deadites for walking, talking and musical instrument-playing skeletons – the cheese was laid on thick. Most of it coming from Ash – Campbell embracing it in such a way it's little wonder the character is a cult icon, and the actor himself a cult legend.

Comparing Ash from *The Evil Dead* to the one seen in *Army Of Darkness*, there's been clear development in his character. Going from unlikely hero to flat-out kick-ass shotgun-wielding nutter, he's as cool as he is stupid. "He's a horrible coward," says Campbell. "I think the funny thing about *Army Of Darkness* is if it was made specifically for a studio, I don't think they would have allowed a main character to flip-flop so badly. I mean, Ash is a coward, he's a braggart, he's a hero, he's a loser – it's all in one." Raimi quickly adds: "I think that's why the audiences can stomach you. You do know how to deal. You're the man when the Evil Dead are around."

As ever, the process of filming was painful one, says Campbell: "Everyone says are the *Evil Dead* movies fun to make? Not really, but they're fun to watch. I enjoyed watching the finished version but everything is so complex. It was an extremely long shoot. We shot for over a hundred days on the main unit, which is as big as any Hollywood movie. That's always been our theory, though: find out ways to save money so you can shoot for a long time. In order to get certain things into the movie we had to dump some of our own money back in."

While Universal afforded Raimi his biggest budget on the franchise yet, an estimated $11 million, there were stipulations. For one, *Army Of Darkness* was test-screened – something neither predecessor had to go through. And while star Bruce Campbell described the feedback from audiences as, "generically okay," Universal decided it wanted changes. Says Raimi: "When Universal domestically accepted it they said it's too long and the ending's a downer. So we reshot an ending and they pretty much cut out about 15 minutes. Although I did have input on that – I can't just claim it was them." Where the original ending saw Ash finally find a way back through time, only to emerge in a post-apocalyptic, completely devastated future, Universal's suggestion was much sillier. Book-ending the film with a trip to the S-Mart where Ash worked, it sees the character describing his time in the Medieval age, just as a Deadite attacks. Ash quickly dispatches of the monster, grabs the nearest hot chick, and kisses her. "Hail to the king, baby."

While a true *Evil Dead IV* has yet to materialise since *Army Of Darkness* was completed in 1993, it has given Raimi time to reflect on the film. "Ivan and I have talked about where we went wrong with the picture," he says. "We lost a lot

The A to Z of Evil Dead

I is for Independent
Because, to all intents and purposes, you couldn't get a more independent horror film than the first *Evil Dead* – shot on a budget of just £375,000.

J is for Joel Coen
Of Joel and Ethan Coen fame, who lived with Raimi and co-edited the first *Evil Dead* film with him. Raimi would collaborate later on *The Hudsucker Proxy*.

K is for KNB EFX
Evil Dead II marked the first film Robert Kurtzman, Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger worked on before going on to form the KNB EFX house.

L is for Latex
Because Raimi couldn't have achieved some of the most grotesque creatures without it, along with KNB EFX on *Evil Dead II* and *Army Of Darkness*.

M is for MPAA
A constant battle with the ratings board affected the first two *Evil Dead* films, with Raimi and Tom Sullivan substituting different colours of blood to start.

N is for Nightmare On Elm Street
After referencing *The Hills Have Eyes* in *The Evil Dead*, Wes Craven repaid Raimi by having two characters watching *Evil Dead* in his movie.

O is for Oldsmobile
Sam's very first car has stuck with him throughout his career, so much that it's appeared in almost every one of his films – just like Bruce Campbell.

P is for Peter Jackson
The award-winning director has often cited Sam Raimi as an inspiration on his career, leading to Jackson's first few films being purely splatter-filled romps.

Q is for Quietness
Where Raimi's scare tactics are concerned, one of his most effective is the use of sound. Surprisingly, *The Evil Dead* and its sequel are very quiet films.

A young Bruce Campbell, covered in blood as he destroys the *Necronomicon Ex Mortis*.

The bigger budget of *Army Of Darkness* gave KNB the chance to make even better demons.

of Ash being a coward and being himself. That's why it didn't work as well. What we loved was Ash being a coward, a braggart, a liar… his character disappears and it becomes about cool skeleton battles like Ray Harryhausen would do – which we've seen Harryhausen do so it's not that interesting. We should have put in more pieces of Bruce interacting." Campbell also has his opinions, mostly aimed at the original ending. "I will always defend it until the end of my days," he says, "because it's not depressing, it's appropriate. The sequence is very cool. It's very sci-fi, and gave a good lead-in to what would or would not become part four." But where exactly is part four?

It looks like a true *Evil Dead IV* will never happen. 2013 saw a return to the big screen with *Evil Dead*, a reboot rather than a direct sequel. It was written and directed by Fede Alvarez and is the first *Evil Dead* film to not to be directed by Raimi or be scored by Joseph LoDuca. Neither does it have Campbell as the main star, though he does return for the briefest of cameos for a post-credits scene that's barely even worth noting. The film performed well at the box office for its opening weekend and received generally positive reviews. It maintained the gory violence, scares, and the atmosphere of dread that so characterises an *Evil Dead* film, but it lacked significantly in one particular area: the humour. *Evil Dead* lacked the absurd humour that made the first film so original.

We're keeping all of our appendages desperately crossed in hopes of a successful *Evil Dead* continuation that comes in the form of *Ash Vs Evil Dead*, a TV show that will premiere in the US on Starz, and hit the screens Hallowe'en 2015. We breathed a sigh of relief when it was announced that Raimi, Campbell and Tapert will be executive producing the 10 episode long series. Campbell will be reprising the role of Ash. We can't wait to see if this older Ash will be any wiser when it comes to dealing with Deadites. We expect not, but that's part of his charm, isn't it?

"I love it when actors get beat up, they don't get beat up in movies any more" – Bruce Campbell

Part of the charm of the series is Campbell himself, clearly.

R is for Rob Tapert
Sam Raimi's producing partner on most of his films, and the co-founder of the studio Ghost House Pictures.

S is for Sam Raimi

Without his inventive visual flair and grotesque ideas, horror would never have received a splatter-filled injection in the early-Eighties. And he was just 22 years old at the time.

T is for Ted Raimi
Ted has had a role in every one of his big brother's films. In *The Evil Dead II* he even portrayed the Deadite Henrietta.

U is for Ultraviolence

One of the biggest staples of the series has been its gore quotient, which often brought it under fire from censors.

V is for Videogames
Unfortunately, while the potential has always been there, it's taken THQ three tries to get the formula right. No plans currently for a fourth, though.

W is for Within The Woods

The low-budget, gory horror movie used as a pitch to show potential investors what Raimi was capable of, that ultimately became *The Evil Dead*.

X is for X-Rated

Originally deemed an X-Rating by the BBFC, *The Evil Dead* became an early-Eighties Video Nasty and was banned from both cinema and video release.

Y is for YouTube
Which is the only place you can see clips from Raimi's *Within The Woods*, save buying a VHS copy on eBay for a very steep price.

Z is for Zombies

There's been a common misconception that the *Evil Dead* films are zombie flicks. They aren't. Deadites don't even operate like zombies. Instead, they possess people and turn them.

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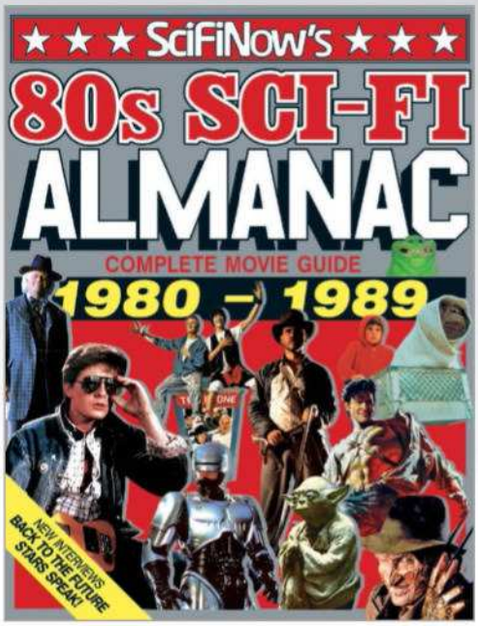

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